



ADMINISTRATION OF THE NAGPORE PROVINCE BY  
MR. G. PLOWDEN, COMMISSIONER, FROM  
1855 TO 1859.

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to G. Plowden, Commissioner of Nagpore.

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\* Extracted from Government of India, Foreign and Political Department, Cons., dated the 28th December 1855, Nos. 66—74.

† Extracted from Government of India, Foreign and Political Department, Cons., dated the 30th December 1859, Nos. 691—694.

‡ Extracted from Secretariat, Political Department, Case-file No. 1 of 1860 (Bundle Correspondence).

§ Do, Government of India, Foreign Department (Political) record of 1859.



*Letter No. 4550, dated, Fort William, the 24th December 1855, from C. BEADON, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, to G. PLOWDEN, Esq., Commissioner of Nagpore.*

When the accounts of the Nagpore territory for the Fuslee year 1263 were passed, certain points adverted to in Captain Elliot's explanatory letter of the 10th August, No. 6, were left for consideration. These are :—

Paragraph 18.—Allowances of the Gond Rajah.

Paragraph 34.—Charitable allowances to Brahmins at the Palace Establishment.

Paragraph 43.—Maintenance of public gardens.

Paragraph 46.—Pension for the Head Darogah of the Public Buildings Department.

Paragraph 63.—Allowances of the late Ruler's relations.

Paragraph 64.—Provision for old Mootsuddies.

Paragraphs 65 and 66.—Provision for the Mahratta and certain of the Mussalman Sillehdars.

Paragraph 95.—Maintenance of the Temple at Moorleedhur.

2. I am directed by the Governor-General in Council to draw your attention to the above points, and to request that you will, in due course, submit the reports which the Officiating Commissioner intended to make to Government and without which it is impossible for the Government to issue any instructions for the regulation and future adjustment of the several classes of charges.

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*Minute by the Governor-General of India in Council, regarding Mr. PLOWDEN'S conduct of the duties of Commissioner of Nagpore.*

Mr. Plowden took charge of the office of Commissioner of Nagpore on the 19th June 1855.

On the 14th July 1856, more than a year after he had taken charge, Mr. Plowden, not having up to that time furnished any reports whatever, was addressed thus :—

"In my letter to your predecessor's address, dated the 30th June 1854,

No. 2862, reports were called for on the subjects mentioned in the margin. No communications having as yet been received on any of the subjects in question, the Governor-General in Council has desired me to call your attention to the above letter, and to enquire what progress has been made

Paragraph 27.—Regular Settlement and Survey.

" 37.—Provision for an illegitimate daughter and illegitimate grandson of the late Rajah.

Paragraphs 38/39.—Religious grants.

" 42/44.—Grants to family retainers, etc.

" 45/46.—Pensions to household servants.

Paragraph 47.—On the old Civil establishments.

" 48/50.—Pensions to Military establishments.

in the investigation of claims to religious grants, pensions, etc., adverted to in paragraphs 38/39, 42/44, 45/46, 47, and 48/50 thereof, and when the Government may expect to receive your report on these several matters, as well as on the important questions to which the 27th paragraph of that letter refers "

" 27 Your Report contains very limited information in Revenue matters, and the system of Revenue management which you may think it desirable to introduce is not described, you have probably reserved any recommendations that you may have to submit on these subjects until you shall have had the opportunity of acquiring a more complete knowledge of the existing state of tenures and rights in the soil and the agricultural usages of the people. The Governor-General in Council deems it sufficient therefore on the present occasion to inform you that as a general measure a summary settlement of the land revenue shall be made for the next three years, and that during its currency the Deputy Commissioners should direct their enquiries to the system of village management prevailing in the different sections of the country, and should be required within a reasonable period to submit their opinions as to the practicability and expediency of hereafter effecting a regular settlement and survey upon the principles which have been elsewhere acted upon with advantage to the Government and the people "

" I am at the same time directed to draw your attention to my letter No. 4550, dated the 24th December 1855, and to request that you will also expedite the transmission of the reports therein called for on the following points :—

Paragraph 18—Allowances of the Gond Rajah—mode of payment to be settled.

Paragraph 34—Chantable allowances to Brahmins on the Palace establishment.

Paragraph 43—Maintenance of public gardens.

Paragraph 46—Pension for the Head Darogah of the Public Buildings Department.

Paragraph 63.—Allowances of the late Ruler's relatives.

Paragraph 64—Provision for old Mutsudees.

Paragraphs 65/66—For the Mahratta and Mussalman Silladars

Paragraph 95—Maintenance of the temple at Moorledhur.

" His Lordship in Council further wishes to be furnished as early as possible with complete schedules of proposed establishments, both Sudder and Mofussil, for the Province of Nagpore. None of these have as yet received the sanction of Government, and information in regard to them is necessary to enable the Government to enforce due economy in the arrangements for the administration of the Province "

A few days afterwards on the 22nd August 1856, Mr. Plowden was addressed again as follows :—

" The Governor-General in Council has learned from your diaries (extracts from which are herewith enclosed) that various prisoners have been committed to your Court for 'murder,' the uniform order upon all being that the case will be taken up in due course '."

" One or two of the prisoners have died since the commitment and the cases have been in consequence 'struck off the file'. His Lordship in Council believes, so far as he is aware, that since the annexation of Nagpore no criminal trial has been submitted for the orders of the Government of India from that

Province. Such reference might have been expected seeing that you are not empowered to execute a capital sentence without authority from the Government of India, and it is hardly to be supposed that in the course of two years no case of murder calling for a capital sentence should have come before you."

"The cases excerpted are taken from your diaries between the 17th May and 28th June last. It has not been thought necessary to search preceding diaries, the cases under notice being sufficient to make the Government desirous of how many commitments are now awaiting trial before you, on what charges the prisoners stand committed, and the date of such commitment. I am accordingly directed to request that you will submit to Government information on these points with the least practicable delay."

"I am also directed to take this opportunity to bring to your notice that the Government receives no periodical returns, in however abstract a form, either of the Civil or Criminal business transacted in the Province of Nagpore. The Hon'ble Court have recently observed that officers discharging such duties, and not subject to the supervision of the Sudder Court, should be under some sort of control on the part of the Government. Two sets of forms which are used by the Commissioner of Mysore, the one for Civil, the other for Criminal business, are accordingly forwarded for your information, and I am to request that you will prepare and send up to Government similar returns, altering the forms so far as it may be necessary to do so in order to adapt them to the constitution of the Agency employed in the Province under your management."

To these letters Mr. Plowden replied on the 12th September that some of the matters mentioned in the letter of the 14th July *had been disposed of and were under report*, and that a separate report showing the progress made in all of them was *under preparation and would shortly be submitted*: and with regard to the letter of the 22nd August that statements containing the information therein called for *had been put in hand and would be submitted without any avoidable delay*.

On the 3rd June 1858, nearly three years after Mr. Plowden took charge of the office of Commissioner and nearly two years after he had written as above, the President in Council recorded the following Resolution:—

"The President in Council observes that on the 14th July and 22nd August 1856, Mr. Plowden was called upon to furnish reports on various subjects then long overdue, and to explain certain entries in his diaries indicating delay in the transaction of important business. Mr. Plowden stated in reply on the 12th September that some of the matters referred to had been disposed of and were under report, and that a general progress report of all was being prepared and would shortly be submitted. Mr. Plowden further represented that statements containing the information called for regarding the entries in his diaries had been put in hand and would be submitted without delay."

"This correspondence was forwarded to the Home Department where a question was then pending as to the payment to Mr. Plowden of certain arrears of salary which had been withheld from him in consequence of some delay in the preparation of his report on salt."

"The papers were returned to this Department, with a minute recorded by the Governor General on the 24th September 1856, and concurred in by the members of Council, in which after referring to the correspondence above mentioned His Lordship expressed his opinion 'that this mode of dealing with the instructions of the Supreme Government is disrespectful, that it raises grave doubts as to the efficiency of Mr Plowden's administration of his charge, and that it makes it impossible for the Government to entertain any claim from him to indulgence or favour until these doubts shall have been cleared up, and until he shall have shown that he has neither neglected his duties, nor trifled with the orders of the Government' "

' There has recently been transferred to this Department for such orders as may now be deemed necessary a copy of Mr Plowden's letter of the 1st August 1856 asking for his arrears of salary, of the minute of the 24th August, and of a letter addressed to Mr Plowden from the Home Department on the 3rd October 1856, to the same effect as the passage quoted from the Minute.

"Since then it does not appear that Mr Plowden has furnished any of the reports or statements called for and promised in 1856, or that any further notice has been taken of the subject "

' The President in Council accordingly desires that Mr Plowden may be called upon to submit an immediate explanation of the delay which has occurred in furnishing the reports in question. It is the intention of His Honour in Council, with advertence to Mr Plowden's application for his arrears of salary, on the receipt of this explanation to forward it with such remarks as may seem to be called for, to the Right Honble the Governor-General for final consideration and orders."

On the same day Mr Plowden was desired to furnish the required reports, with an immediate explanation of the delay which had already occurred in transmitting them. Up to this time however Mr Plowden has not sent up any of the reports required of him, except one on the Sayer Revenue of the Province which has recently been disposed of, he has not furnished any periodical returns of Civil or Criminal business, and he has supplied the Government with no information at all of a general kind. But on the 23rd September last he sent in a letter in explanation of this delay, and of his failure to give the Government any information as to the general administration of the Province, or as to the numerous important questions connected with it which press for decision. In this letter of the 23rd September Mr Plowden first recapitulates the substance of former applications he made to Government representing the overwhelming nature of his duties, and the necessity for giving him further assistance. In these previous applications the first of which is dated December 6th, 1856,\* Mr Plowden, after enlarging vaguely upon the excessively heavy nature of his duties, which, it may be observed are not more arduous than those of the Commissioner of Pegu, the disarrangements under which he laboured by reason of inefficient and unexperienced establishments, and of sickness and the quantity of work

\*Nearly three months after Mr Plowden's assurance and promise of the 12th September

actually accomplished (of which the Government had very imperfect evidence), he asked first for a Judicial Commissioner—and afterwards for both a Judicial and a Financial Commissioner as in the Punjab.

These requests were not complied with, firstly, because Mr. Plowden had relieved himself of the great bulk of his judicial duties, by making over, with the sanction of Government, the disposal of the commitments of the District Officers to Mr. Ellis, and afterwards to Major Elliot; secondly, because the vague character of the grounds assigned by Mr. Plowden was not such as to justify the Government either in sanctioning so large an addition to the cost of the permanent establishment or in recommending it to the Home Authorities; and thirdly, because the despatch modifying these proposals, which was promised in Mr. Plowden's telegrams of the 4th December 1857, was never submitted. This non-compliance however cannot be alleged by Mr. Plowden as an excuse for his subsequent shortcomings, because on the 4th of December 1857 Mr. Plowden took upon himself to delegate the powers of a Judicial and Revenue Commissioner to Major Elliot with full authority in the former capacity to pass and carry out all sentences short of death, and also to vest Mr. Ellis and afterwards Mr. Ross with the superintendence of the Revenue Survey and Settlement of the Province. It appears moreover that Mr. Ellis completed the enquiries into claims to pensions, and made great progress in the enquiry into cash alienations from the revenue; thus relieving the Commissioner of a large portion of his duties, and leaving him nothing in these Departments but to report the result to Government which he has altogether failed to do.

Mr. Plowden then, in fact, has been allowed to have ever since December 1857 the most material part of the assistance which he solicited from Government, and yet none of the reports which he promised on that condition have been submitted. All that Mr. Plowden asks for in his letter of the 23rd September is that Major Elliot in addition to the powers he was and is still exercising should undertake all the English and other business in the Judicial, Revenue, and Police Departments appertaining to a Commissioner leaving him (Mr. Plowden) "still to perform all the Judicial, Revenue and Police functions of the Judicial, Financial and Chief Commissioners in the Punjab together with all the duties in the Political, Public Works and Military Departments." But while on the one hand it will be seen that Major Elliot is already exercising almost all the functions with which Mr. Plowden proposes to vest him, on the other hand Mr. Plowden's description of the duties left for himself to perform must be taken in connection with the fact that Nagpore contains only 4 districts yielding a revenue of 50 lakhs, while the Punjab (exclusive of the Delhi Territory and Hill States) contains 25 districts yielding a revenue of 2 crores, and Pegu where the Commissioner does the whole work without any agency intermediate between him and the District Officers, and does it well and punctually, consists of 6 districts (including a large seaport town) yielding upwards of 40 lakhs of revenue. Mr. Plowden also points to the Jubbulpore Division where the Commissioner has the assistance of a Civil and Sessions Judge; but this aid was given him when the Division consisted of 11 districts yielding nearly 50 lakhs of revenue, and even now the Division comprises 8 districts with a total area not very much less than that of Nagpore.

In the 20th paragraph of his letter Mr. Plowden says that if he has the assistance of a Commissioner he might hope in six months to bring up his arrears of



replies and reports due to Government in all Departments : but virtually he has had this assistance since December 1857 and yet *none* of the reports are furnished. When they do come Mr. Plowden says they will shew that no where has more been accomplished with greater advantage to the Government and contentment to the people than in Nagpore, and that nowhere, on the whole, has the Government been served more laboriously or zealously. This may or may not be so ; but I cannot take it upon Mr. Plowden's bare assurance so long as the Government is kept so ill-informed of all that goes on in the Province.

The remainder of Mr. Plowden's letter of the 23rd September consists of proposals to remunerate Major Elliot and Mr. Ellis for their services and to remodel the establishments. These proposals will be considered separately.

The quarterly statement of unanswered references submitted as an Appendix to Mr. Plowden's letter is in itself a formidable catalogue of arrears, but it gives but an imperfect idea of the reports and returns which are due from him, and of the other arrears in his office.

He has not submitted a general report on the administration of the Province for any one year since he assumed charge of it.

He has furnished no report on the system of revenue management adopted in the Province, or of the demands, collections and balances,—none on the administration of Civil or Criminal justice,—none on the Police,—none on the Jails,—none on Public Works or Buildings.

He has submitted no definite or practicable scheme of public education though expressly called on to do so by orders of the 12th March 1857.

He has furnished no quarterly abstracts of Civil or Criminal business or rendered any information on these subjects since October 1857.

He has failed to render the accounts of the Province to the Accountant General.

He has made no complete and general report of the occurrences during the mutinies, though repeatedly called upon to do so,—nor has he sent in the names of those who have rendered good service to the Government and are deserving of reward.

We have had no report whatever regarding the organization of the Sudder and Mofussil Establishments.

We know nothing of the plans formed for the Survey and Settlement of the Province, or of the progress made on them.

We have had no report on the claims and conditions of the family of the late Rajah, or the provision to be made for their support, or the grants and pensions allotted to their retainers, or the old native establishments, or on the religious and charitable allowances granted by Native Government.

Besides these, there are many matters of minor importance, on which reports have been called for from Mr. Plowden in vain ; and there are some on which, though reports have been received, the delay in dealing with them has been noticed with reprehension.

Last is the case of Captain Bell by whom the gravest charges have been brought against Mr. Plowden. The first of these charges dates from more than two years ago. They have been contradicted by telegraph messages from Mr. Plowden, but they still remain substantially unanswered, notwithstanding repeated assurances that a report would be shortly submitted.

Within the last few weeks the following telegrams have been received from Mr. Plowden:—

28th June.—“ I have been suffering from repeated attacks of fever for many days past which has incapacitated me during the last few days from attending to business for more than five or six hours daily, and has more especially prevented me from submitting a fresh proposition. I have to make for enabling me to take up the many very important matters which are overdue and which I cannot hope to do, unless I am fully relieved of all current duties, except the duty of supervision and control. More by post in a few days, I hope. ”

July.—“ I am still unfit for full work, and beg the indulgence of a few days to enable me to complete a postal copy in Captain Bell's case, and also to submit a final proposition for enabling me to take up and clear off the many important matters which are lying over through no fault of mine, within the next six months. ”

31st July.—“ I have been suffering continually from fever since my message of the 2nd instant and more especially during the last week which has rendered me incapable of any great exertion and compels me to moderate my labors. My Personal Assistant has also been laid up with fever during the past week. I hope under present treatment to be fit for full work again in a few days. ”

Nearly two months have passed since the date of the last of these messages, and Mr. Plowden's promises, so far as regards any communication to the Government on the important subjects referred to in them, have been in no way kept. Not one written word on those subjects has been received from him.

These are Mr. Plowden's shortcomings in the conduct of the business of his commission.

It would not be fair to recite them, without at the same time giving him the credit which is his due for the successful preservation of order in Nagpore during the very critical times of 1857 and 1858 which formed a great part of the period that has been reviewed. Mr. Plowden's position was one of peculiar difficulty. He had a large, recently acquired, and still unsettled country to keep in allegiance. The force supplied to him for the purpose was necessarily small. It was frequently drawn upon for the protection of neighbouring districts; and Mr. Plowden promptly and uncomplainingly responded to all calls made upon it. Yet when Mutiny or Rebellion showed itself in Nagpore it was repressed speedily, and the province has, upon the whole, remained orderly and well affected.

The credit is not wholly Mr. Plowden's; but a large share of it is due to him.

Still I am compelled to come to the conclusion that Mr. Plowden, with all his acknowledged ability, cannot be relied upon to conduct efficiently the ordinary but most important duties of his charge; and that it has become necessary for the public good, and for the credit of the Government that he should be relieved of it. The forbearance shown to him has been very great, but it has been profitless, and it must cease.

I propose then that Mr. Plowden be removed from the post of Commissioner of Nagpore.

The fittest man to succeed him is Major Elliot, now the second Officer of the Commission, and one whose services have received the highest commendation of the Government. I propose therefore that Mr. Plowden be directed to make over his charge to Major Elliot.

No 374  
From—G F EDWARDS, Esq.,  
Secretary to the Government of  
India with the Governor-  
General  
To—Cecil PRADON, Esq.,  
Officiating Secretary to the  
Government of India, Foreign  
Department, Calcutta.

Dated Ootacamund, 12th July 1855.

In regard to Captain Bell I recommend that Major Elliot be called upon to say whether he considers that that officer can advantageously be retained in the service of the Commission.

In the absence of all explanation from Mr. Plowden of the matters which Captain Bell has brought to the notice of the Government it is impossible to judge finally of Captain Bell's conduct.

He has been insubordinate; but, if his allegations be true, this is not without excuse; and his proceedings have the appearance at least of being dictated by a regard for the public interest, and devoid of unworthy or selfish purposes.

Major Elliot should be told that the Government will reserve its decision respecting Captain Bell until it is in possession of his report upon that officer's conduct.

I am directed to state for the information of His Highness the President in Council that Mr. Geo. Elliot has reported that Mr. Geo. Elliot who has been in charge of the Commission of Nagpore on the 19th ultimo over since Mr. Marsel relinquished charge, proceeded upon leave of absence which is rendered necessary by the fair state of his health.

The Most Noble the Governor General has been in constant personal, as well as official communication with Captain Elliot ever since he assumed charge of the Local Government in the new Province. He has had every reason to be entirely satisfied with the manner in which he has discharged his duties and important duties of the office which has been entrusted to him, and His Lordship appreciates highly the ability he has exhibited in the administration of the Province—the firmness, discretion and temper with which he has managed the difficult remainder of the Royal family at Nagpore, and the public duties which he had applied himself to his local duties with the same energy and diligence.

His Lordship is satisfied that the organization of Nagpore and the organization of its Civil and Military establishments have been conducted in perfect tranquility and without any serious disturbance. It is more than justice to say that the credit of the Government is due to the credit of these officers, and to those who acted under them as Officers of the Commission of Nagpore.

Before Captain Elliot's departure from Nagpore, which he has been compelled to take, His Lordship has been left with the past services of that officer and will leave upon him when it may be necessary to be done, the advancement which His Lordship has had in his merits, and which he should be allowed to be taken upon Captain Elliot.

His Lordship desires to suggest to the President in Council that these officers should be commended to Captain Elliot, and that he should reserve the best thanks of the Government of India for his services in Nagpore.

Since the chief part of this minute was written a case occurred which illustrates Mr. Plowden's mode of discharging his duties.

On the 14th of August Mr. Plowden telegraphed that the Jageerdar of Raikherree was in rebellion, that his people had made a raid into Hoshangabad and cut up some police; and that troops had marched on Raikherree from Hoshangabad, and that others would co-operate from Chindwara. The telegram ended with the words "More by post".

On the 25th of August nothing more having been received Mr. Plowden was requested to report quickly.

On the 28th he telegraphed that all was quiet; that the village of Raikherree had been burned by our force from Hoshangabad; but that that force being too weak had returned; that the Chindwara force was still in the field; and finally, that he had every hope of preventing a combined rebellion among the Jageerdars which would be a serious matter. Again the telegram ended with "Full particulars by to-morrow's post".

On the 8th instant nothing had come, and Mr. Plowden was again reminded of his promise.

He replied by telegraph to the effect that he has been in constant correspondence with the Chindwara and Jubbulpore authorities, which had caused him to postpone his report; that he had taken measures to prevent a combination of the Jageerdars; and that all was quiet at Nagpore, the Jageerdar having committed no overt act of rebellion beyond resisting the troops sent against him!

Again the message ends with "I hope to report immediately".

It is now the 24th of September or six weeks since the 1st beginning of the disturbance, which was certainly such as to make a full and early report to the Government a part of Mr. Plowden's duty; but not one word beyond these messages has been received from him.

It is impossible to tolerate this neglect of duty, and I therefore repeat the recommendation that Mr. Plowden be at once removed from his post.

(Signed) CANNING.

*September 24th, 1859.*

I concur.

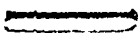
(Signed) J. OUTRAM.

*27th September 1859.*

I entirely concur.

(Signed) H. B. HARINGTON.

*27th September 1859.*



*Letter No 6061, dated, Fort William, the 3rd October 1859, from C. BEADON, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, to G. PLOWDEN, Esq., Commissioner of Nagpore.*

The Governor-General in Council having had under consideration the manner in which the duties of Commissioner of Nagpore have been performed since you assumed charge of the Province, I am directed by His Excellency in Council to communicate the following observations and orders.

2. On the 14th July 1856, more than a year after you had taken charge of your office, no reports whatever having been furnished upto that time, you were addressed thus in Mr. Secretary Edmonstone's letter of that date:

"In my letter to your predecessor's address, dated the 30th June 1854, No 2862, reports were called for on the subjects mentioned in the margin.\* No communications having, as yet been received on any of the subjects in question the Governor-General in Council has desired me to call your attention to the above letter, and to enquire what progress has been made in these several matters as well as on the subjects of that letter refers."

I am at the same time directed to draw your attention to my letter No. 4550, dated the 24th December 1855, and to request that you will also expedite the transmission of the reports therein called for on the following points—

Paragraph 18—Allowances of the Gond Rajah, mode of payment to be settled.

Paragraph 34—Charitable allowances to Brahmins on the Palace Establishment.

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Paragraphs 65/66—For the Mahratta and Mussalman Sillehdars.

Paragraph 95—Maintenance of the temple of Moorledhur."

"His Lordship in Council further wishes to be furnished as early as possible with complete schedules of proposed establishments, both Sudder and Mofussil, for the Province of Nagpore. None of these have as yet received the sanction of Government, and information in regard to them is necessary to enable the Government to enforce due economy in the arrangements for the administration of the Province."

3. A few days afterwards, on the 22nd August 1856, you were addressed again as follows:—  
"The Governor-General in Council has learned from your diaries (extracts from which are herewith enclosed) that various prisoners have been committed

to your Court for 'murder', the uniform order upon all being that the case 'will be taken up in due course', one or two of the prisoners have died since the commitment and the cases have been in consequence 'struck off the file.' His Lordship in Council believes, so far as he is aware, that since the annexation of Nagpore no Criminal trial has been submitted for the orders of the Government of India from that Province, such references might have been expected seeing that you are not empowered to execute a capital sentence without authority from the Government of India, and it is hardly to be supposed that in the course of two years no case of murder calling for a capital sentence should have come before you."

"The cases excerpted are taken from your diaries between the 17th May and 28th June last. It has not been thought necessary to search preceding diaries, the cases under notice being sufficient to make the Government desirous of knowing how many commitments are now awaiting trial before you, on what charges the prisoners stand committed, and the date of such commitment. I am accordingly directed to request that you will submit to Government information on these points with the least practicable delay."

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4. To these letters you replied on the 12th September that some of the matters mentioned in the letter of the 14th July *had been disposed of and were under report* and that a separate report showing the progress made in all of them was *under preparation and would shortly be submitted*, and with regard to the letter of the 22nd August that statements containing the information therein called for *had been put in hand and would be submitted without any avoidable delay*.

5. On the 3rd June 1858, nearly three years after you took charge of your office and nearly two years after you had written as above, the President in Council recorded the following Resolution;—

"The President in Council observes that on the 14th July and 22nd August 1856 Mr. Plowden was called upon to furnish reports on various subjects then long overdue, and to explain certain entries in his diaries indicating delay in the transaction of important business, Mr. Plowden stated in reply on the 12th September that some of the matters referred to, had been disposed of and were under report, and that a general progress report of all was being prepared and would shortly be submitted. Mr. Plowden further represented that statements containing the information called for regarding the entries in his diaries had been put in hand and would be submitted without delay."

' This correspondence was forwarded to the Home Department where a question was then pending as to the payment to Mr Plowden of certain arrears of salary which had been withheld from him in consequence of some delay in the preparation of his report on salt '

' The papers were returned to this Department with a minute recorded by the Governor General on the 24th September 1856 and concurred in by the members of Council in which after referring to the correspondence above mentioned His Lordship expressed his opinion 'that this mode of dealing with the instructions of the Supreme Government is disrespectful that it raises grave doubts as to the efficiency of Mr Plowden's administration of his charge' and that it makes it impossible for the Government to entertain any claim from him to indulgence or favour until these doubts shall have been cleared up and until he shall have shown that he has neither neglected his duties nor trifled with the orders of the Government "

' There has recently been transferred to this Department for such orders as may now be deemed necessary a copy of Mr Plowden's letter of the 1st August 1856 asking for his arrears of salary, of the minute of the 24th August and of a letter addressed to Mr Plowden from the Home Department on the 3rd October 1856 to the same effect as the passage quoted from the minute

' Since then it does not appear that Mr Plowden has furnished any of the reports or statements called for and promised in 1856, or that any further notice has been taken of the subject'

' The President in Council accordingly desires that Mr Plowden may be called upon to submit an immediate explanation of the delay which has occurred in furnishing the reports in question It is the intention of His Honor in Council with advertence to Mr Plowden's application for his arrears of salary on the receipt of this explanation to forward it with such remarks as may seem to be called for, to the Right Honble the Governor General, for final consideration and orders

6 On the same day you were desired to furnish the required reports, with an immediate explanation of the delay which had already occurred in transmitting them Up to this time however you have not sent up any of the reports required of you except one of an imperfect kind on the Sayer revenue of the Province which has recently been disposed of, you have not furnished any periodical returns of Civil or Criminal business and you have supplied the Government with no information at all of a general kind

7 But on the 23rd September 1858 you sent in a letter in expiation of this delay and of your failure to give the Government any information as to the general administration of the Province, or as to the numerous important questions connected with it which press for decision In this letter of the 23rd September you first recapitulate the substance of former applications you made to Government respecting the overwhelming nature of your duties, and the necessity for giving you further assistance In these previous applications the first of which is dated December 6th 1856 (nearly 3 months after your assurance and promise of the 12th September) after enlarging vaguely upon the excessively heavy





and even now the Division comprises 8 Districts with a total area not very much less than that of Nagpore.

11. In the 20th paragraph of your letter you say that if you have the assistance of a Commissioner you might hope in six months to bring up your arrears of replies and reports due to Government in all Departments but virtually you have had this assistance since December 1857 and yet *none* of the reports are furnished. You say that when submitted, these reports will shew that nowhere has more been accomplished with greater advantage to the Government and contentment to the people than in Nagpore, and that nowhere on the whole has the Government been served more laboriously or zealously. This may or may not be so; but His Excellency in Council cannot take it upon your bare assurance so long as the Government is kept so ill-informed of all that goes on in the Province.

12. The Quarterly Statement of unanswered references submitted as an appendix to your letter is in itself a formidable catalogue of arrears, but it gives but an imperfect idea of the reports and returns which are due from you, and of the other arrears in your office,

13. You have not submitted a general report on the administration of the Province for any one year since you assumed charge of it.

14. You have furnished no report on the system of revenue management adopted in the Province, or of the demands, collections and balances; none on the administration of Civil or Criminal justice; none on the Police; none on the Jails; none on Public Works or Buildings.

15. You have submitted no definite or practicable scheme of public education though expressly called on to do so by orders of the 12th March 1857.

16. You have furnished no quarterly abstracts of Civil or Criminal business or rendered any information on these subjects since October 1857.

17. You have failed to render the accounts of the Province to the Accountant-General.

18. You have made no complete and general report of the occurrences during the mutinies though repeatedly called upon to do so, nor have you sent in the names of those who have rendered good service to the Government and are deserving of reward.

19. You have submitted no report whatever regarding the organization of the Sudder and Mofussil Establishments.

20. The Government knows nothing of the plans formed for the Survey and Settlement of the Province or of the progress made on them.

21. No report has been submitted on the claims and conditions of the family of the late Rajah, or the provision to be made for their support, or the

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grants and pensions allotted to their retainers, and to the old Native Establishment or on the religious and charitable allowances granted by the Native Government.

22. Besides these there are many matters of minor importance on which reports have been called for from you in vain; and there are some on which though reports have been received the delay in dealing with them has been noticed with reprehension.

23. Within the last few weeks the following telegrams have been received from you:—

28th June—"I have been suffering from repeated attacks of fever for many days past which has incapacitated me during the last few days from attending to business for more than five or six hours daily, and has more especially prevented me from submitting a fresh proposition I have to make for enabling me to take up the many very important matters which are overdue, and which I cannot hope to do, unless I am fully relieved of all current duties, except the duty of supervision and control: more by post in a few days I hope."

July—"I am still unfit for full work and beg the indulgence of a few days to enable me to complete a postal copy in Captain Bell's case, and also to submit a final proposition for enabling me to take up and clear off the many important matters which are lying over through no fault of mine, within the next six months."

31st July—"I have been suffering continually from fever since my message of the 2nd instant and more especially during the last week which has rendered me incapable of any great exertion and compels me to moderate my labour, my personal Assistant has also been laid up with fever during the past week. I hope under present treatment to be fit for full work again in a few days."

Two months have now passed since the date of the last of these messages and your promises, so far as regards any communication to the Government of India on the important subjects referred to in them, have been in no way kept. Not one written word on those subjects has been received from you.

24. Another case has recently occurred which illustrates your mode of discharging your duties.

25. On the 14th of August you telegraphed that the Jageerdar of Raikheree was in rebellion; that his people had made a raid into Hoshungabad, and cut up some Police; and that troops had marched on Raikheree from Hoshungabad, and that others would co-operate from Chindwara, the telegram ended with the words "more by post."

26. On the 25th of August nothing more having been received, you were requested to report quickly.

27. On the 28th you telegraphed that all was quiet; that the village of Raikheree had been burned by our force from Hoshungabad; but that that force being too weak had returned; that the Chindwara force was still in the field; and finally that you had every hope of preventing a combined rebellion among the Jageerdars, which would be a serious matter. Again the telegram ended with "full particulars by to-morrow's post."

28 On the 8th September nothing had come and you were again reminded of your promise

29 You replied by telegraph to the effect that you had been in constant correspondence with the Chindwara and Jubbulpore authorities which had caused you to postpone your report that you had taken measures to prevent a combination of the Jageerdars, and that all was quiet at Nagpore, the Jageerdar having committed no overt act of rebellion beyond resisting the troops sent against him. Again the message ended with the words 'I hope to report immediately'

30 It is now more than six weeks since the first beginning of the disturbance which was certainly such as to make a full and early report to the Government a part of your duty, but not a line beyond these messages has been received from you

31 Last of all is the case of Captain Bell by whom the gravest charges have been brought against you. The first of these charges dates from more than two years ago. They have been contradicted by telegraph messages from you, but they still remain substantially unanswered notwithstanding repeated assurances that a report would be shortly submitted

32 These are your shortcomings in the conduct of the business of your commission

33 The Governor General in Council well knows that it would not be fair to recue them without at the same time giving you the credit which is due for the successful preservation of order in Nagpore during the very critical times of 1857 and 1858 which formed a great part of the period that has been reviewed. Your position was one of peculiar difficulty. You had a large recently acquired and still unsettled country to keep in allegiance. The force supplied to you for the purpose was necessarily small. It was frequently drawn upon for the protection of neighbouring Districts and you promptly and uncomplainingly responded to all calls made upon it. Yet when mutiny or rebellion showed itself in Nagpore it was repressed speedily and the Province has upon the whole remained orderly and well affected

34 The credit of this is not wholly yours but a large share of it is due to you. Still His Excellency in Council is compelled to come to the conclusion that with all your acknowledged ability you cannot be relied upon to conduct efficiently the ordinary but most important duties of your charge, and that it has become necessary for the public good and for the credit of the Government that you should be relieved of it

35 The forbearance shown to you has been very great, but it has been fruitless, and must cease

36 The Governor General in Council has accordingly resolved with much regret to remove you from the post of Commissioner of Nagpore, and to place your services at the disposal of the Government of Bengal. Major Elliot, now the second Officer of the Commission has been appointed to succeed you, and you are requested to make over charge of your office to him, as soon after you receive these instructions as possible. A copy of this letter has been furnished to Major Elliot for information and for record in the Commissioner's Office

*Letter No. 6062, dated Fort William, the 3rd October 1859, from C. BEADON, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, to Major F. K. Elliot, Deputy Commissioner, 1st Class, Nagpore.*

I am directed to acquaint you that the Governor General in Council, for the reasons stated in my separate letter\* of this date, copy of which is enclosed for your information, and for record in the Commissioner's Office, has resolved to remove Mr. G. Plowden from the post of Commissioner of Nagpore, and to appoint you to succeed him.

2. Mr. Plowden has been directed to make over charge of his Office to you as soon after the receipt of these orders as possible.

3. With reference to paragraph 31 of the letter to Mr. Plowden, the Governor-General in Council requests that you will state, after a full consideration of all the circumstances of the case, whether you consider that Captain Bell can advantageously be retained in the Commission.

4. In the absence of all explanation from Mr. Plowden of the matters which Captain Bell has brought to the notice of the Government, it is impossible to judge finally of Captain Bell's conduct. He has been insubordinate, and even defiant of the Commissioner's authority, but his allegations may be true, and his proceedings have the appearance at least of being dictated by a regard for the public interest, and devoid of unworthy or selfish purposes.

5. The Government will reserve its decision respecting Captain Bell, until it is in possession of your report upon his conduct. You will understand that you are not expected to express any opinion upon Mr. Plowden's proceedings, or to enter further than can be avoided into the merits of the controversy between him and Captain Bell, but that you are to confine yourself to the question, whether, after all that has occurred, it is desirable that Captain Bell should remain in Civil employment in the Province.

6. Annexed is a list of Captain Bell's letters, copies of most of which have been furnished by him to Mr. Plowden. Four letters from Mr. Plowden are also entered in the list. No copy of these documents are forwarded to you, as, if not in the Commissioner's Office, they can be obtained otherwise at Nagpore.

7. I am desired further to request that you will make immediate arrangements, subject to the approval of the Government, for the discharge of the duties of the Subordinate Offices of the Commission, consequent upon your promotion: and that you will, at your earliest convenience, submit a statement of arrears of business in the Commissioner's Office and report how you intend to dispose of them. It is essential that the information which has been so frequently demanded from Mr. Plowden, on every branch of the administration, should be furnished without any further delay.

No. 6196

FORT WILLIAM:  
FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.  
*The 3rd October 1859*

## NOTIFICATION

His Excellency the Governor-General in Council is pleased to appoint E K Elliot to be Commissioner and Agent to the Governor-General in the Province of Nagpore, *vice* Mr G. A. C Plowden, whose services are placed at the disposal of the Government of Bengal

CECIL BEADON,  
*Secretary to the Government of India*

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*Despatch No 43 dated London, the 27rd September 1859, from the Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Right Honble the Governor-General of India in Council*

74 1 I transmit to you herewith a copy of a printed memorandum\* on the affairs of Nagpore, submitted to the Secretary of State for India in Council, by Mr R S Ellis of the Madras Civil Service, Deputy Commissioner in that Province, at present residing in England

2 In the absence of all recent information relating to the progress of events in Nagpore Her Majesty's Government are unable to form any opinion respecting the probable accuracy or inaccuracy of Mr. Ellis' statements, but this very absence of information is a proof of Mr Plowden's remissness, and of his neglect of the instructions of the Government under which he serves

3 Her Majesty's Government being therefore, owing to Mr Plowden's own failure without any means of disproving the statements contained in the memorandum, desire that you will lose no time in instituting a searching enquiry into the allegations it contains. It will not be sufficient that you should send this memorandum to Mr Plowden for his remarks, as such a course would involve considerable delay from which serious evil might arise. I would therefore direct that you should select a competent officer of high standing and character to proceed to Nagpore and to investigate on the spot the grave charges preferred by Mr Ellis against his official Chief. As the enquiry into all these statements may occupy considerable time, the Special Commissioner selected by you should be instructed to report to your Government, as soon as he is able to form an opinion, on any one of the leading points animadverted upon by Mr Ellis

4 If the report of the Special Commissioner on any leading charge selected for primary consideration should be unfavourable, you are requested to suspend Mr Plowden during the prosecution of the enquiry into the remaining statements and until the instructions of Her Majesty's Government are communicated to you

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## MEMORANDUM RELATING TO NAGPORE.

It is easy, reading past events by the light of the present, to condemn Lord Dalhousie's policy of annexation, and to wonder at the blind zeal and rapidity with which that statesman carried into effect a policy which hastened the events of 1857,—but it is both idle and unjust to cast all blame upon the former Governor-General, or to hold him alone guilty of the unjust increase to our territories which took place during his administration. The majority of the Court of Directors, the Board of Control, the majority of the members of the Supreme Council, and many of the most experienced subordinate Indian officials supported and applauded the bold and consistent policy of the Governor-General. It required such a catastrophe as the revolt of the native army to awaken the British nation to the real position of India and to the practical effect of Lord Dalhousie's measures, while it has required all the resources of Great Britain to re-establish order over a great part of our Indian Empire.

Order is, however, restored, and it is necessary now to consider not only what improvements shall be introduced into the Government of our Indian Empire, but also whether, in obedience to the dictates of justice, we can safely retrace any of our steps, or restore those possessions which we have wrongfully acquired. The chief objections which will be raised to this course are, that restitution would be misinterpreted by the natives and princes of India, and that an act of the British nation, indicative to the European world of magnanimity and power, might be understood in India only as a sign of fear and weakness. Another objection is, that it would be cruel, after giving the natives of the recently annexed territories the experience of a just and benevolent Government, to surrender them once more to the despotism and misrule of their native sovereigns. Some weight may be attached to the first of these objections, although it may reasonably be believed that our loss would be more than compensated by the gratitude and respect of the natives for such signal acts of justice. As regards the second obstacle to restoration, it is a painful truth that it requires a longer experience of our rule than has been given to the natives of the territories annexed during Lord Dalhousie's administration, to convince them that our Government is really benevolent and actually advantageous to them. At present they have only learnt how severe is the land tax of the British Government, how inexorable are the collectors of the revenue, how tardy is the justice of the civil courts, how imperfect and yet oppressive is the police, and how uncertain the tenure of the hereditary landholders of the country.

Whatever force there may be in objections to the restoration of our recently acquired territories, it is impossible to disguise our policy or to conceal the reasons which make us adopt as our principle the maxim of *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*. It is, however, right and necessary that we should understand thoroughly the grounds upon which each case of annexation is based, so that we may determine in each given case the amount of injury done by the past policy of the British Government in India, and in what manner compensation—if not restoration—may best be made to the injured.

The object of the present memorandum is briefly to describe the annexation of Nagpore, the condition in which the members of the Royal family of Nagpore have been left, and certain circumstances in connection with our administration:

in the Province of Nagpore which appear worthy of the immediate attention of the Council of India

The strong feeling which prevails at Nagpore upon this subject, the knowledge that justice, though repeatedly promised, has not yet been done to the widows, adopted son, and relatives of the last Rajah, who died on the 11th of December 1853, imperatively demand an immediate and serious consideration of the present circumstances of this country

At the death of the last Rajah, he left four widows who subsequently adopted, according to Hindoo custom, their nearest male relative, the young Prince Yeswunt Rao Aher Rao, who consequently took his family name of Bhonslah. The grandmother of the deceased Rajah, the Banka Bae was however still living, and both from the force of her talents, her age, high character and personal popularity, was practically the head of the family

From the date of the last Rajah's demise to the present time (June 1859) no definitive settlement of the rank of the adopted heir has been authorised, no final arrangement of the palace finances has yet been made, and the proceeds of the sale of the royal property, which had been effected by the late East India Company, still remain in the hands of the Supreme Government

But the most serious cause of dissatisfaction at Nagpore is the vacillating conduct of the present Chief Commissioner, Mr George Plowden, who, after promising speedy settlement of these outstanding claims, has hitherto postponed any report to Government, after promising the proper recognition of the young prince's rank, and the settlement of a fit stipend upon him, now denies his promise, and who finally has repudiated the acts and undertakings made by his subordinate officers with his cognizance and consent, has insulted the natives of rank, who requested the fulfilment of his promises, and has suspended his Assistant Commissioner for declining to lend himself to the Commissioner's unseemly and illegal treatment of the royal family of Nagpore

In order to render intelligible a brief narrative of the annexation of Nagpore, it will be necessary to trace the events which preceded the accession of the late Rajah, Rughojee III, to the sovereignty of the Nagpore country. The following summary, forming part of Lord Dalhousie's Minute regarding the annexation, sets forth the principal historical facts \*

"The present territory of Nagpore forms a small portion of the powerful State which, under the dominion of the house of Bhonslah, 12 Rajahs of Berar, was one of the chief members of the Mahratta Confederacy

"Rughojee Bhonslah first raised the family to sovereign rank about the year 1743, and at his death, in 1755, his dominions acquired partly by conquest and partly by usurpation from the Gond Rajah of Deogurh, extended from the Nerbudda to the Godavery, and from the Ajuntah Hills to the Bay of Bengal

"The second Rughojee, during all the earlier part of his reign, maintained relations of amity with the British Government, but after the fall of Tippoo Sultan, and the partition of his dominions, the jealousy felt by the Mahratta powers

\* Dated 28th January 1854 (Parliamentary Papers, Raja of Berar July, 1854, or pages 21—44 of Collect on regarding Escheat of the Nagpore Province—1853 54)



of the increasing ascendancy of the British induced Rughojee to take part with Scindiah against them. He shared the defeat of Scindiah at Assaye; and having subsequently lost the greater part of his army at Argaum, he signed the treaty of Deogaum, which deprived him of Berar and Cuttack, and of other portions of his dominions.

"Upon the death of Rughojee, 1816, he was succeeded by his son Pursojee, who was replaced in the following year by Appa Sahib.

"Shortly after his accession, indications of unfriendly feelings towards the British Government were betrayed by the Rajah, Appa Sahib. His secret negotiations with the Peishwa Bajee Rao, with Scindiah, and with the Pindarees were detected, and his treachery was soon afterwards openly displayed by his attack upon the Resident and the British troops, which led to the famous action at Seetabuldee, on the 26th and 27th November 1817.

"After the lapse of some days, terms were granted to Appa Sahib, under which he surrendered himself to the Resident. Notwithstanding this surrender, the Rajah's troops fought another action at Nagpore, on 16th December, and defended the city till the 30th December, when it was given up. Thereafter a provisional engagement was formed by the Resident with Appa Sahib, whereby he was to be retained upon the musnud on condition of giving up certain territories, together with other concessions. This provisional engagement was confirmed by the Governor-General.

"Appa Sahib, however, had no sooner been restored to power than he recommenced his intrigues against the British Government. His renewed treachery was so apparent that he was arrested by the Resident on the 15th March 1818. On his way towards Allahabad he effected his escape from his guard, and, after an unsuccessful attempt during that year to regain his hold of Nagpore, he fled to Hindostan in February 1819. Appa Sahib died at Joudpoor in 1840.

"Immediately after hearing of the attack upon the British troops at Seetabuldee, the Governor-General informed the Resident at Nagpore, that he had resolved upon the 'establishment of the grandson of the late Rajah, Rughojee Bhonslah, by his daughter, Bala Sahib, in the dignity of Rajah.' The Governor-General added, . . . "The territory conquered from Appa Sahib by the British arms will be conferred upon the new Rajah, after such deductions as the British Government may think proper to make."

"The resolution of the Governor-General was not at that time carried into effect, by reason of the provisional engagement which had in the meantime been made by the Resident for the restoration of Appa Sahib to the musnud, and which the Governor-General had at once confirmed. But upon the renewal of the treachery of Appa Sahib in March following, the Governor-General directed that he should be dethroned, and that the resolution taken in December 1817 should be carried into effect. Accordingly, on the 18th June 1818, the Resident was thus addressed: 'You are apprised that the Governor-General contemplated elevating to the musnud of Nagpore the infant son of Nana Goojur by a daughter of the late Rajah Raghojee Bhonslah, and you will have been prepared to give effect to that resolution. Should you not already have done so, under

the general sanction deducible from the former instructions, you will be pleased to proclaim the young prince Rajah of Nagpore, and to invite Banka Bae to exercise the office of guardian of the young Rajah and regent of the State.' No treaty was made at that time; but in 1826 a treaty was concluded whereby his territories were guaranteed to the Rajah, 'his heirs and successors.'

"The Rajah was placed on the musnud on the 25th June. The Banka Bae was appointed Regent; but the administration was carried on for many years on behalf of the British Government by the Resident, Mr. Jenkins, greatly to the benefit of the Rajah, and with infinite advantage to the people of Nagpore."

In the year 1826, when the late Rajah Raghojee Bhonslah was approaching his majority, Sir Richard Jenkins wrote as follows: "The early restoration of the State of Nagpore to its rank as one of the substantive powers of India, continues to be the earnest wish of the Governor-General in Council."

Accordingly, on the 13th December 1826, a treaty was ratified by Lord Amherst, then Governor-General of India, by which the Rajah of Nagpore confirmed the treaty made by Appa Sahib in 1816, ceding certain territories to the British Government, for the payment of the expenses of the permanent military force maintained by the British Government in His Highness' territories, and in lieu of the subsidy of 7,50,000 rupees formerly paid by the said Rajah, and of the contingent he was bound to maintain by the former treaty.

The British Government on its part guaranteed the rest of the dominions of the Nagpore State to the Maha Rajah Rughojee Bhonslah, his *heirs and successors*.

In the preamble to this treaty, the Maha Rajah Rughojee Bhonslah is described as having succeeded to the same by the favour of the British Government.

These facts are important, because they prove that when Appa Sahib rebelled in 1817, and was deposed by the then Governor-General, the Marquis of Hastings, it was resolved not to annex the kingdom of Nagpore, as undoubtedly was the right by conquest of the British Government; but to condone the treason of Appa Sahib, so far as it affected the Bhonslah family, by placing the next heir, the grandson of Rughojee II, by his daughter Bala Sahib, on the musnud, and the appointment by the British Government of a regency during the minority of the young Rajah.

It will thus be seen that although by right of conquest the State of Nagpore was at our disposal in 1818, it was not then annexed, but without any interregnum the next heir was allowed to *succeed* to Appa Sahib, deposed on account of his treachery and rebellion.

Accordingly, on the 25th June 1818, the young prince Bajee Rao, grandson of Rughojee II, was formally installed in the musnud, and the then Resident, after reporting the installation of the Rajah, wrote thus: "One ceremony yet remains, which is the adoption of the young Rajah into the Bhonslah family, which will be deferred until Goojur's arrival. This is required to enable him to assume the name of Bhonslah, and to entitle him to the hereditary succession, according to the practice of Hindoo States."

Lord Dalhousie, when arguing for the annexation of the kingdom of Nagpore, lays great weight upon the fact that the adoption followed instead of preceding the elevation of Bajee Rao to the musnud, in order that this adoption should not be counted on as a precedent upon which the Bhonslah family should claim the right to adopt an heir and successor on the sudden death of the late Rajah without male heir of his body or by adoption.

This point is not really of any importance; when the Governor-General resolved not to inflict on the Bhonslah family the punishment deserved by one member of it, Appa Sahib, he turned to the next heir, Bajee Rao, and permitted him to succeed to the sovereignty. The Hindoo religious ceremony of adoption was a matter that concerned the Rajah and his relations much more than the Government. The same reason that induced the Governor-General to permit Bajee Rao to succeed to the musnud—namely, that Appa Sahib being deposed he, Bajee Rao, as grandson of Rughojee II, was the rightful heir of the Bhonslahs, was the cause of his adoption into the Bhonslah family.

The real question at issue upon the death of the late Rajah was, whether the widow of the Rajah should be allowed to exercise the right of adoption, and thereby secure the continuance of Nagpore as a Native State; or whether, as the paramount power in India, the British Government should refuse its consent to the exercise of this right.

No one can read the treaty of 1826 and not believe that the Rajah of Nagpore, at the time that treaty was executed, was regarded as being in the same position as if he had regularly succeeded Appa Sahib as Rajah of Nagpore. No fresh cession of territory was required of the young Rajah; he merely confirmed the cession of territory made by Appa Sahib, the ratifications of which had not been exchanged during Appa Sahib's tenure of power.

In the treaty of 1826 there is no trace of any disallowance or restriction of the ordinary Hindoo law of inheritance, nor, until the death of the late Rajah, was any such restriction as would prevent the adoption of an heir and successor ever claimed by the superior or acknowledged by the inferior power.

The Resident, Mr. Jenkins, in the report submitted by him to the Government in 1826, lays down specifically the rules of succession to the Nagpore State, with all the authority which was given to him by long residence in the State, by intimate acquaintance with its rules and customs, and by participation in the direction of its highest concerns. Mr. Jenkins writes: "It may be useful here to give a sketch of the general principles which are acknowledged to regulate the succession to the guddee or musnud in the Bhonslah family. The fundamental maxim upon which it depends is, that 'it is hereditary in the entire male line from the common ancestor or first founder of the dynasty, to the exclusion of females or their issue; but that the right may be limited or changed by the reigning prince adopting a successor according to the rules of the Hindoo law.'"

"Another maxim generally acknowledged is, that 'on the death of a Rajah leaving no male heir, it is the privilege of his principal widow to adopt a child from the relations of her husband to succeed him, and herself to govern in his name.'"

As years passed and no male heir was born to the Rajah, several Residents at the Court of Nagpore had their attention directed to the course to be pursued in the event of the Rajah dying without a male heir

In February 8th, 1837, Mr Cavendish, then Resident, addressed the Government on this subject, giving it as his opinion that adoption should not be allowed. The Government of India in answer said 'It seems to His Lordship in Council to be quite premature to enter into any consideration of the subject adverted to in your letter of the 8th ultimo. The Rajah is a young man, and it is too soon to speculate on his dying without issue'

Three years later Major Wilkinson again requested to be instructed "what course should be adopted for the future government of this country". Major Wilkinson differed from his predecessor, Mr Cavendish, regarding adoption. He considered that the Rajah had been placed in exactly the same position as had been occupied by Appa Sahib, and that he or his widow would have a right to adopt

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Four years later, November 3rd, 1844 the Government was again addressed regarding adoption by Colonel Speirs, then Resident at Nagpore. Colonel Speirs gave no definite opinion, but suggested that 'our advice should be made as little intrusive as possible, and should be guided by the general opinion of the family and the public'

The Governor General in Council replied "In the event of the death of the present Rajah without leaving children or an adopted son you should make arrangements for conducting the Government of Nagpore pending the orders of the Government of India which orders will be based on the circumstances that may present themselves at the time and the right to make adoption which might be considered to attach to any surviving member of the Rajah's family'. Thus as Lord Dalhousie remarks, 'until the death of the late Rajah no recognition of the right to adopt was made, but the question was left entirely open'. It is not less certain that no prohibition to adopt was ever communicated to the late Rajah of Nagpore during his lifetime

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and responsibly. From the fact that the Rajah, previous to and during his short and suddenly fatal illness, did not adopt a successor, Lord Dalhousie considered that the Rajah had no wish to see the sovereignty descend to an adoptive son, and that his widow, influenced by the knowledge that these were her Royal husband's feelings, was equally disinclined to have recourse to adoption after his decease.

General Low, however, a very distinguished member of the Supreme Council, dissented from the Governor-General and from the other members of the Supreme Council as to the supposed right of the Government of India to annex the State of Nagpore. His views are entitled to the highest respect and consideration as those of an accomplished and high-minded Indian statesman, and his paper is of much value as containing an exact account of the real motives which influenced the late Rajah of Nagpore in delaying, previous to his sudden and fatal illness, to adopt a successor, and the real causes which made the Banka Bacc and the Ranees of the late Rajah delay adopting a son in accordance with Mahratta custom until such time as the intentions of the British Government should be communicated to them.

#### "FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.

*"Minute by the Honourable Colonel F. LOW, C. B.*

*"On the death of the Rajah of Nagpore, and Minute by the Governor-General, dated 28th January 1854, respecting the measures to be adopted by the British Government in consequence of that event.*

"1. After a very careful perusal of the Most Noble the Governor-General's Minute on this important subject, and of the various papers circulated along with that document, it is with feelings of sincere regret that I found it quite out of my power to arrive at the same conclusion as His Lordship has done respecting the course which the British Government ought now to pursue towards the Nagpore State; and I can truly add, that I write this minute with much reluctance, for it vexes me that it should be my duty to express, on an important subject, sentiments which are opposed to those of a statesman whose great talents, whose eminent public services, and whose whole character I view with genuine admiration and respect.

"2. There is also another cause for my disinclination to write this minute, which I may as well confess at once, *viz.*, that I feel completely convinced that, practically speaking, it will have no effect whatsoever on the majority of the public functionaries in London, who will have to consider and to decide this question.

"3. Nor shall I be in the least degree surprised at such a result, more especially so if the Commissioners for the Affairs of India should exercise their legal prerogative in this case, by deciding the question (whether the Court of Directors may agree with them or not); for it is perfectly natural that the members of the Board of Control should not allow any weight whatever to the notions on such a question, of an officer like myself, who is entirely unknown to them, when opposed to the deliberately-formed opinion of a statesman like the Marquis of Dalhousie, in whose well-proved ability and judgment, and high integrity of purpose they have entire confidence.

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"4 Nevertheless, as I know it to be the duty of a member of Council towards the Court of Directors to state his opinion honestly on every question of importance even when he may differ from all his colleagues, while I have the satisfaction also of knowing that the present Governor General would wish me to express my sentiments freely at all times, I shall now proceed to state my views on this Nagpore question very fully, because the final decision of this question may possibly establish a precedent that may lead to very extensive effects for good or evil, on the interests of the British Indian Empire

'5 Before I proceed further, I think it right to make some general observations connected with the practice of adding to the Company's own empire, by the annexation to it of dominions which now belong to native princes

'6 If Great Britain shall retain her present powerful position among the States of Europe, it seems highly probable that, owing to the infringement of their treaties on the part of native princes and other causes, the whole of India will, in the course of time become one British province, but many eminent statesmen have been of opinion that we ought most carefully to avoid unnecessarily accelerating the arrival of that great change, and it is within my own knowledge that the following five great men were of that number *viz*, the Marquis of Hastings Sir Thomas Munro, Sir John Malcolm, the Honble Mountstuart Elphinstone, and Lord Metcalfe

"7 Although I know the above mentioned fact to be correctly stated, it is not at present in my power to quote the precise reasons on which those statesmen grounded their opinions, but I think it right to mention some of the reasons which have led me to form exactly the same opinion, and honestly to believe it to be a sound one

"8 I do not think that any country governed as India is, by a few foreigners can be in a really prosperous, or even in a safe condition, till there shall be among its native subjects a much more general attachment to the ruling powers than there is at present among the inhabitants of British India above all, I do not think that we ought to annex a Native State which has not failed in its engagements with us to our dominions till there shall be a far greater number of our subjects in the possession of wealth and influence, and enjoying high consideration among their own countrymen, than are now to be found in the Company's territories, in short till there shall be numbers of men in every large district, so prosperous and wealthy, and so thoroughly satisfied with their condition, that they shall be sincerely attached to our Government, and be both able and willing for their own interests to afford important aid to us, by the exertion of their influence in the event of our Indian possessions being invaded by powerful foreign foes or endangered by any internal insurrection or want of fidelity in our native army

'9 That sort of influence comes when required to the aid of rulers, more or less in all national Governments, but we do not yet possess any such advantage in British India, and in my humble opinion we are not likely to possess it for the next 60 or 70, or perhaps 80 years to come

'10 So far from increasing or keeping up the previous number of wealthy or influential men in those Native States which we annex to our own territory, we



uniformly and immediately diminish the number of such men in those countries. This is not the fault of the officers employed in such new territories, neither is it the fault of the local Governments of India during the last half century or more, for they have only been acting according to a long established system confirmed by their superiors in England.

" 11. The general effects which I have described of the number of men of wealth and influence being immediately diminished, when we take possession of a new territory, have probably been produced by various causes; such, for instance, as that of our remitting large portions of the revenue for pensions and salaries in England (which bring no return to India), instead of spending such revenues within the countries which produce them, as all national Governments do. And, again, our not employing natives in high military commands, or in very important civil offices, must also have the same general tendency; and so must the fact of our being foreigners, who never associate with, or make personal friends of, natives of India. But without entering into further details, I may truly say, that the effects to which I have alluded are inevitable, from the whole nature of our system; and it is not now in our power, except by very slow and gradual steps, in any material degree to alter that system. That we shall in the course of time, by promoting general education among our subjects, by giving them more important employment under us, by granting long leases of landed estates to men of good character, and by other means, make great improvements in their conditions, I have no doubt at all; but I feel equally sure that it will require a long course of years to effect all the changes which are desirable for our own permanent prosperity and security in India.

" 12. I could cite in detail, were it necessary, several instances in time of famine, which have occurred at different times within my own personal knowledge, in the Deccan, in the Saugor territory, and in the North-Western Provinces, of our having suffered heavy losses in revenue, and very extensive losses in human lives, owing to the want of wealth among our native subjects; while in the neighbouring Native States, which had experienced exactly the same drought, they did not suffer nearly so much, either by the death of their subjects or in revenue, solely because the wealthy jagirdars and zamindars, and other men of property (and, as far as regards Oude, even farmers of districts), made large advances of money from their private funds whereby great numbers of men, by digging new wells, were enabled to raise sufficient grain to keep them alive for the season, and who but for those advances of specie, must assuredly have died of starvation.

" 13. No very great merit, in many of these cases, could be attributed to the donors or lenders of the money, because they knew that by saving the lives of their ryots they would secure themselves from heavy pecuniary losses of revenue in the subsequent year; and I need scarcely say, that in ordinary seasons their districts were not governed with nearly so much justice or efficiency as the neighbouring provinces of the British Government were. I only mention these facts in illustration of my assertion that it would be a great advantage to ourselves if there was more individual wealth among the native subjects of our dominions.

" 14. But I must not longer delay to offer my opinion on the particular case which is now before Government.

" 15 When I first received the impression (a few days ago) from a conversation which I had with the Governor General, that His Lordship was likely to arrive at the conclusion respecting Nagpore at which he since has arrived, my mind was a good deal occupied, after I left His Lordship, in reflecting upon the following important question *viz*, ought we not to be contented with the territories already in our possession without going out of our way to make further annexations to the already enormously extensive dominions of the East India Company?

" 16 The only answer which I can conscientiously give to such a question is that we ought undoubtedly to be satisfied with what we have and that, even for our own interests, it would be wise policy, during the ensuing 20 years to endeavour to avoid rather than to seek for opportunities of annexing more of the Native States to our own dominions, by which policy we should not only secure the loyalty and willing co-operation in ordinary times of most of the native princes in alliance with us, but we might reasonably hope in that way to bring a conviction into their minds that their own individual interests would be secured and promoted by the stability of the British supremacy even if India should ever be invaded by powerful foreign enemies. It has often been and may again be of no trifling advantage to our own interest that the rulers of Native States should have a friendly feeling towards us. During our disasters in Afghanistan, Colonel Sutherland at Ajmere, and I myself at Lucknow felt so confident that we could do so with safety that we permitted (both of us having been allowed the option) considerable numbers of our own troops to leave Rajpootana and Oude, in order to join our forces to the westward and no inconvenience whatsoever ensued, while great numbers of camels and large quantities of grain were supplied from Rajpootana \* and upwards of 40 lacs of rupees in specie and many elephants were lent by the King of Oude, solely for the purpose of aiding us in our operations in the field.

" 17 I cannot perceive that there is any sort of necessity for our adding Nagpore to our own territories at present, were it only for the following reasons —

1st — That there is a remarkably good feeling towards us on the part of the inhabitants of that country, as it is probably a stronger one than there will be after it shall have been 10 years in our own possession.

" 2nd — Because our general finances are in a highly prosperous condition, in comparison to former times, and with every prospect of their improving still more.

" 3rd — That we are already exposed to constantly recurring inconveniences, from the want of a sufficient number of Civil and Military officers for the duties of our present possessions.

" 4th — That it seems a pity to disturb the arrangements in that part of India which have answered all our general purposes so remarkably well as those at Nagpore have done during the last 30 years, for so quietly has the Native Government managed its internal concerns, that we have not had occasion to have a single shot fired by a British soldier in the support of the Durbar during the whole of that long period of time.

\* On that occasion several of the principal Rajpoot Chiefs also begged Colonel Sutherland to let them and some of the Cavalry to serve with our troops against the Afghans — [Low]

"Lastly.—If it be thought by the Governor-General that some additional revenue from that part of the country is necessary or proper, we might easily obtain an additional 12 lacs per annum, without any expense in collecting it, by adopting the plan sketched by Mr. Mansel in the latter part of his Despatch No. 29, dated the 14th December last, of allowing the senior widow to adopt Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao, who, in the Resident's opinion, 'would decidedly be preferred by the mass of the courtiers to any other youth for the musnud, whether given to him by adoption or grant from the Company;' and the Resident further observes (paragraph 31), that, 'on the one hand, such an arrangement would yield to the British Government considerable financial and political advantage, and, on the other hand, it would preserve a Native State in feudal chieftainship. The prejudices of the native aristocracy would be thereby conciliated, and by no means an uninfluential section of the public opinion, here and in Europe, would, we would hope, be satisfied at our moderation.'

"18. In regard to the increase and improvement of cotton cultivation, it appears to me that there are ample fields for our operations in the extensive districts of the Southern Maratha Country, and in other parts of India which are our own property, and in the valley of Berar, which is under our exclusive management, without our requiring any part of Nagpore for our work of that sort.

"19. I think it right on this occasion to record my knowledge of the fact that the confidence of our native allies in our good faith has been a good deal shaken by some of the events of late years, and especially so by our conquest and occupation of Scinde, our attack upon Gwalior, and our annexation of Sattara; and it seems to me in the highest degree desirable that we should now endeavour by our acts towards Native States generally to remove from the minds of those princes their present feelings of uncertainty and distrust, and not to run the risk of exasperating such feelings into deep-rooted discontent with their own condition and prospects, and, in many cases, into a hatred of the British rule.

"20. So soon as the permanent annexation of Nagpore shall be known in the Deccan, in Goozerat, in Malwa and in Rajpootana and Bundelcund, there will assuredly be throughout those extensive countries much of the dread and discontent above alluded to engendered, which cannot be removed without many years of moderation on our part from the minds of the native rulers, generally speaking; but, of course, in an especial degree, from the minds of those who are without sons of their own to succeed to their respective principalities.

"21. Unfortunately, the evil effects which will be produced by such feelings as those above described, will not be confined to want of useful co-operation with us on the part of those princes. Many of those men are too selfish and avaricious already, and such men will become infinitely more so, and will be more cruel and extortionate than ever they were before, if they have no legitimate sons, and have consequently every reason to fear that there will be no lands to leave behind them for their widows, and other members of their families.

"22. Every native prince so situated must naturally become more indifferent than ever he was previously about the general prosperity of his dominions, when he shall have reason to believe that, at his own death, those territories will pass away for ever into the hands of a foreign power.

"23 In my conversations with natives, when I was in Rajpootana, there never was any unpleasant remark made to me respecting the annexation of the Punjab. Some said Duleep Singh was an unlucky youth in having such bad counsellors, but no one ever said that the British Government acted with injustice in annexing that territory to its own, they seemed perfectly to understand that an invasion of our territory entitled us, according to the ordinary course of human affairs, both to repel the invaders and to seize their country.

"24 But every person who mentioned the subject to me—and there were numerous persons who did so—held totally different language in regard to the annexation of Sattara. They did not make use of many words on such occasions, my own situation, being one of authority over them, placed them under great restraint in that respect but what they did say, and their manner of saying it showed me very clearly that they thought it a case of might against right, and all expressed an earnest hope, evidently accompanied by some dread in their minds to the contrary, that a kind Providence would save the Rajpoot families from such disgrace and disaster.

"25 One vakeel belonging to the Jeypoor Government made a remark to me to the following purport, *viz*, 'I don't know how the Deccan Rajahs will feel or act but if the Company's Sirkar ever carry that sort of practice into effect in Rajwarra, God help the men who have any money in those States where the Rajahs happen to have no sons.' And he then mentioned particularly how that such a man as the Rajah of Oodeepoor would extort money from his subjects in all directions to leave behind him to his wives and concubines if he thought that he could not adopt whom he liked as his successor.

"26 When I went to Malwa, in 1850, where I met many old acquaintances whom I had known when I was a very young man, and over whom I had no authority in 1850, I found those old acquaintances speak out much more distinctly as to their opinion of the Sattara case, so much so, that I was on several occasions obliged to check them.

"27 It is remarkable that every native who ever spoke to me respecting the annexation of Sattara, asked precisely the same question, *viz*, 'what crime did the late Rajah commit that his country should be seized by the Company?'—thus clearly indicating their notions, that if any crime had been committed, our act would have been justifiable, and not otherwise.

"28 Of course I got rid of the questions abovementioned as best I could, by saying that I could not give them any information in the matter, as I had not seen any of the papers connected with it, but I mention these facts now, in justification of my belief, that as soon as the annexation of Nagpore shall be known, similar questions will be anxiously asked by natives all over India, and no human being will be able to answer them to their satisfaction. They will never hear the arguments by which this Government justifies itself in its own opinion for annexing that country, and they would not think them valid if they did hear them. They only know a few great facts, and they reason upon them. They know that the late Rajah did not make war upon us, or upon any of our allies, they know also that he did not neglect to pay his tribute to us, they know that he did not so mismanage his country as to cause inconvenience to us, they consider that the succession to a Raj like that of Nagpore is one of those matters of interior arrangement with which the paramount State has nothing to do, unless there should happen to be rival competitors, and they know full well, notwithstanding the fact that the Rajah did not himself adopt any one, that some one would have been adopted by the senior widow and the principal people about the durbar as successor to the Raj, if they had not been deterred from doing so by the presence of a British Resident.

"29. I feel as sure as I am of my own existence, that I have above correctly described what the feelings of the native princes of India, generally speaking, will be if we now annex the Nagpore country to British India, and I feel equally sure that extensively mischievous effects in various ways will be produced by that act, which were not contemplated as being possible by the Most Noble the Governor-General, when he wrote his minute on this subject. We shall gain a few lacs of rupees of revenue per annum, and we shall save a good many families and individuals from occasional over-taxation; but we may indirectly be the cause of more evil of that very description in other States than the good which we shall effect in Nagpore; and the feelings of indifference about the welfare of their subjects, and of discontent respecting their own prospects, which will be engendered in the minds of other native rulers, will, in some instances, with men who chance to have no sons of their own, amount to a deep-rooted hatred of our supremacy that can scarcely fail, though perhaps indirectly, to be injurious to our own interests.

"30. Adverting to all the facts and considerations above recorded, it is my very decided opinion that we ought not now to annex the Nagpore territories to the dominions of the East India Company.

"31. On reading over this minute, I see that I have only discussed the question as regards the impolicy, according to my views, of the proposed annexation. I have not said anything very specifically as to our rights in this particular case; it seems, therefore, only due to myself that I should also state my opinion on that point; but as this paper has already extended to a great length, I will to-morrow write a separate one on the question of our right.

"32. Before closing this minute, however, I beg to copy a celebrated declaration made by the Duke of Wellington in 1802, and then to make a brief observation on my own part.

"33. The declaration in question was the following, *viz.*, 'I would sacrifice Gwalior, or any frontier ten times over, in order to preserve our character for scrupulous good faith.'

"34. I have much satisfaction, as connected with our prosperity in India generally, in knowing that the Most Noble the Governor-General is as great an admirer as I am of the above quoted declaration. I know also that nothing would induce His Lordship to annex Nagpore if he did not consider that we have a clear and undoubted right to do so; and I am disposed to think that he would have felt disinclined to adopt the measure if he had thought it probable that sensible and well-intentioned native princes would really view it as detracting from our reputation for good faith. But be that as it may, I am myself fully convinced that the sincere opinion of most of our Hindoo allies will be, that the senior widow of the late Rajah ought to have been invited (as Baeza Bae at Gwalior was) to adopt a successor to the throne of Nagpore; and I feel equally sure that they will honestly and sincerely believe, when we annex the Nagpore territory to our own dominions, that we have departed from that honourable and scrupulous good faith which they formerly attributed to the East India Company's Government.

"10 February, 1854.

(Signed) J. LOW."

*Further Minute by the Honourable Colonel J Low, C B*

"1 In my minute of yesterday I discussed the projected annexation of Nagpore as a question of policy, I shall restrict myself in this minute chiefly to the question of our supposed right by the treaty to adopt such a measure

"2 I give my opinion on this point with some diffidence, in consequence of its being different from that of the Most Noble the Governor General, but as it is my duty to express my sincere opinion with honesty, whether it be an erroneous or an accurate one I now proceed to do so as briefly as I can consistently with distinctness in showing the facts and the reasonings on which I have formed that opinion

"3 As I consider it now certain that in a few months hence the Nagpore country will be annexed to the British Indian Empire I can say with entire sincerity that it would give me real pleasure if I could believe that our right to annex it has been satisfactorily proved\*, but the belief in a man's mind on many subjects is not at his own option and I regret to say that I find it impossible to believe that we have now a legal right by the treaty, or by any general law of nations to deprive the Bhonsla family and the chiefs of the Nagpore territory of their right to regulate the succession to the throne according to their own wishes and their own customs

"4 Before proceeding further I beg to say a few words respecting the popularity of our former administration at Nagpore

5 It is quite natural that the people at Nagpore should have a most grateful recollection of the Government of Sir Richard Jenkins it would, indeed be extraordinary and entirely unaccountable were it otherwise but we shall deceive ourselves if we expect that our future rule in that country will be equally popular with that of Sir Richard Jenkins for the following reasons viz at that time the whole people of the Nagpore dominions felt that their own institutions were not to be disturbed They knew that in a few years afterwards they were to have their own Rajah, who they naturally hoped would be a good one, but in the meantime the Resident acted towards them in every respect in his public measures exactly as a peculiarly kind, liberal, just and highly talented native Rajah would have done From motives of generosity and good policy at the time Sir Richard kept up many of the old native establishments which were not really necessary for the maintenance of good order He was very moderate in his revenue assessments (he had no possible motive to be otherwise), he did not attack or curtail the possessions of any of the large zemindars, he allowed the native heads of villages to manage the police in the system of the previous native Government he did not seize for the durbar any of the rent free lands and above all, he did not send away to any distant country a single rupee of the revenues, the whole of which were expended, one way or other, within the country which (on a very moderate assessment) had produced them, except a small sum per annum that was placed in the Rajah's treasury for the legitimate purposes of that very country and for no other purpose In short, Sir Richard governed exclusively for the benefit of the people of the Nagpore country, and not for any direct advantage to the East India Company

\* Because believing as I do that our reputation for good faith will be ruined and that we shall thus lose more than the other parts of India it would give me real satisfaction if I could believe that at least we had a legal right to act as we are now about to do at Nagpore—J Low

"6. I say without fear of contradiction, that it is utterly impossible that the administration of any future British Commissioner in charge of Nagpore can ever be so popular as that of Sir Richard Jenkins, after that country shall become our own; and I think no one can dispute the accuracy of that assertion, who will reflect upon the facts described in the preceding paragraph, and then take into consideration even the few of the consequences that must inevitably follow our annexing the Nagpore territory, which I now proceed to mention, *viz.*, the grant and chief cause of our rule not being so popular as before, or not so useful to the Nagpur people, will be this, that, as a matter of course, we shall draw off a large portion of its revenues to other countries, for our own purposes. Secondly, that we shall, for the sake of economy, discharge many military and other establishments, among the Nagpore people, which Sir Richard Jenkins kept up; and, lastly, that we shall gradually, perhaps, but not less certainly, for our own convenience and profit, make many alterations from the native modes of management, and substitute other modes in lieu of them, which changes cannot be popular among the inhabitants of that country, because, although our Government is highly valued in many respects by the natives of India, and very naturally so from our integrity and our justice, yet they are in one respect exactly like the inhabitants of all other parts of the known world, they like their own habits and customs better than those of foreigners.

"7. I fully admit, however, that the great mass of the people in the Nagpore country ought in reason to be contented under the system of Government now projected for them by the Governor-General, and they will certainly be governed with much more justice than they ever were under the late Rajah; but the men of high rank and influence in the country will, in my opinion, be less contented than they are now; and it does not even follow that the lower classes of the people, ten or twelve years hence, will feel any gratitude to us for having taken them under our rule. I fear that a large proportion of the people will be too likely to do, as I know they did in the Poona territory, namely, to forget the injustice and the oppression which they often suffered under their native rulers, and to magnify the annoyances to which they will occasionally be subjected from the strictness of our general system, and from the arrogance and petty tyranny of native official servants under our officers, which last is a species of evil that no exertions on our part can prevent.

"8. But supposing, for the sake of argument, that our rule were to be, for all time to come, most popular among the people, that prospect of itself would not be sufficient to justify our acting contrary either to the spirit of the letter of the treaty, and in my sincere opinion, we shall, in this case, be acting contrary to both.

"9. The first time the idea was ever started by any one, that the late Rajah of Nagpore and his family did not possess the same rights as Appa Sahib before his deposition or any former Rajahs of Nagpore, was in 1837, by Mr. Cavendish, in his despatch dated the 8th of February of that year.

"10. Mr. Cavendish's sentiments on that subject were expressed in the following words, *viz.*, 'In my opinion, adoption should not be allowed, for the British Government conquered this country and gave it to His Highness and his sons, and on his death without an heir apparent or posthumous child, it should

eschew or lapse to our Government', and again in the following words, which occur in the same despatch, viz, 'At Gwalior, Hyderabad, Lucknow, &c, such a procedure would be improper for those countries were not given to the present or former rulers by the British Government, and they cannot therefore lapse to it on the failure of heirs mediate but the territories of Nagpore Mysore, and Sattara were granted by the Honble Company, and no one but a descendant of the grantee ought to succeed or can by the laws of the land advance any just claim to the succession

"11 The above quotations show, it may be presumed, the opinion which Mr Cavendish had formed of the intentions of the Marquis of Hastings, when he signed and sealed the treaty by which the late Rajah succeeded to the throne of Nagpore but Mr Cavendish in giving this opinion, did not even take the trouble to make any quotation from the treaty, in order to show the grounds on which he had founded his opinion

12 Now, if opinions of individual officers given in that manner about treaties with foreign States, without discussing and without close attention to the actual wording of those documents were to be allowed to have any weight with British Indian Government, it would lead to most glaring inconsistencies of conduct and often to acts of great injustice. The most opposite opinions might in that way be acted upon at different times, without any proper cause for such difference of procedure. For instance I conceive that I had myself a better opportunity of forming a correct opinion merely from general information respecting Lord Hastings' intentions in regard to Nagpore than Mr Cavendish because in 1820 and 1821 I had several personal conversations with Lord Hastings (and also with Mr Adam and Mr Swinton) on Nagpore affairs generally, and my full belief from that intercourse was then and is still, that His Lordship considered the Rajah whom he had placed on the throne of Nagpore in 1818 to be in possession of precisely the same rights, both present and future, respecting heirs and successors as His Highness would have had if Asaph Sahib had died suddenly and had never offered the paramount power



gave what to my mind is an unanswerable reply to that dictum of Mr. Cavendish, I beg leave here to quote the following extract from Major Wilkinson's despatch, dated the 30th June of that year :—

" My predecessor, Mr. Cavendish, in his despatch to Mr. Secretary Macnaghten, dated 8th February 1837, in second paragraph, gave it as his opinion that 'adoption should not be allowed, because the British Government conquered that country, and gave it to His Highness and his sons ; and on his death without an heir apparent or posthumous child, it should escheat or lapse to our Government.' I cannot find in the records of this office, that the country, as stated by Mr. Cavendish, was given to His Highness and his sons ; and in the preamble of the treaty of the 1st December 1826, at the conclusion, is the following sentence ' Appa Sahib entered into fresh concert with the enemies of the British Government. That Government was consequently compelled to remove him from the musnud, and Maharaja Raghojee Bhonsla having succeeded to the same by the favour of the said Government, the following treaty is concluded between the States.' From this I think it is evident, that the present 'Rajah' was placed in the exact position Appa Sahib was removed from, which was that of an independent prince possessing the same power and authority as any other independent prince in India. As such he entered into a treaty of alliance with the British Government on the 1st December 1826, which treaty was subsequently modified by the treaty of the 26th December 1829. By neither of these treaties did he relinquish any right, in failure of sons legitimate, to adopt. If, therefore, other independent princes or their widows have the power to adopt, it seems to me that he or his widow has the same.

" After the most mature deliberations, I cannot come to any other conclusion than the one above stated ; for if we had intended to restrict the succession to the lineal male descendants of His Highness the Rajah, such would have been expressed in one or other of the treaties referred to.

" 15. The portions of the foregoing extracts which I have now underlined appear to me absolutely unanswerable. They prove most clearly to my mind that, according to fair dealing and according to the treaty, and our usages heretofore in our dealings with other Hindoo States, the principal widow at Nagpore should now be allowed to adopt a successor to the throne of that State.

" 16. I now beg to quote in the margin\* a further extract from the same despatch, in order to show that Major Wilkinson did not give the above-quoted opinion from any partiality to the scheme in the abstract of keeping up a native Government in Nagpore. His feelings, as will be seen, were the very reverse of that; and he thus formed his opinion upon an honest and unprejudiced construction of the treaty.

\* See below.

" 17. There is no doubt in my mind that we ought to act according to the *bona fide* meaning of the contracting parties at the time the treaty was signed and sealed by Lord Hastings ; and I conquer entirely with Major Wilkinson in

\* "I should have been glad if I could have coincided in opinion with Mr. Cavendish, for the course he recommends would be most beneficial and gratifying to the mass of the population of the State, who desire nothing so much as to be placed under the British Government ; and it is not a mere idle wish for change, for they have experienced the blessings of the rule of British officers. The only people who would regret the change are a few favourites about court, and their followers."

thinking that if we had intended to restrict the succession to the lineal male descendants of His Highness the Rajah, such would have been expressed in one or other of the treaties.' And again as no unusual restrictions of any sort were inserted in the treaties I also concur fully with Major Wilkinson in his assertion, that 'the Rajah was placed in the exact position Appa Sahib was removed from, which was that of an independent prince, possessing the same power and authority as any other independent prince in India. As such he entered into a treaty of alliance with the British Government on the 1st December 1826 which treaty was subsequently modified by the treaty of the 26th December 1829. By neither of these treaties did he relinquish any right in failure of sons legitimate to adopt. If therefore other independent princes or their widows have the power to adopt it seems to me that he or his widow has the same.

18 The underlining which appears under six of the words of the preceding extract is not in the original. I have now underlined them in order to illustrate distinctly Major Wilkinson's and my own construction of the treaty, as bearing on the present state of affairs at Nagpore.

19 I observe in the Governor General's minute at the close of the 23rd paragraph His Lordship states that the boy was made Rajah of Nagpore by the British Government long previous to any adoption of him into the Bhonsla family. His adoption in short, was the consequence of his elevation to the musnud, not the cause of it.

20 I do not in any way dispute the accuracy of the foregoing statement but what I would submit for consideration is this that the relative position of the two Governments is totally different now at this vacancy from what it was in 1818, by the deposition of Appa Sahib. We had then conquered the Nagpore Rajah in a public war and we had thereby a right to do what we chose with the State. For instance we might have thought it our interests so to do have selected a Rajah without giving him the title of Bhonsla at all or we might have appointed a Mahomedan to be the future ruler of the remaining territory of which Nagpore is the capital.

21 But as we thought it our interests to place a young Hindoo Rajah on the throne to have him adopted into the Bhonsla family and to enter into a formal treaty with him, which made him an independent sovereign as far as regards all the interior arrangements of the State and as he was actually placed in that position at the expiration of his minority, I conceive that we are bound by every obligation of good faith (and that we have no legal right to act otherwise) to deal with this case exactly as we should have done if Appa Sahib had died a natural death, without having ever given us any offence and had been succeeded by the late Rajah in the ordinary course of affairs as the nearest male relative of his immediate predecessor.

22 Such being my view of our duties in the present state of affairs at Nagpore, I think we ought to follow as near as we can the former usages of the Bhonsla family in regard to the succession and that we cannot take a better guide for that purpose than Sir Richard Jenkins, who in the 11th section (headed Government and Court of Nagpore) of his Report addressed to Lord Amherst in July 1826 gave the following account of one of the customs and usages of the Nagpore Government:—'Another maxim, which is acknowledged is, that on

the death of a Rajah leaving no male heir, it is the privilege of his principal widow to adopt a child from the relations of her husband, to succeed him, and herself govern in his name. We followed this principle in our arrangements for setting up the present Rajah.'

"23. In my opinion the question which we ought now to put to ourselves is not whether it will be advisable or unadvisable for our interests to select a new Rajah, as we did in 1818, but simply the following one: 'Have we or have we not a right, according to the treaty as it stands, to hinder the Bhonsla family (widows and relatives) of the late Rajah from settling the succession to the vacant throne according to their own customs and wishes?' My own opinion is, that we have not any such right. I could not conscientiously give any other answer to the question, because I should feel that any other answer must be more or less contrary to that principle of international law (always deemed, I believe, to be a sound one in Europe) which declares that 'one party to a treaty cannot be allowed to introduce subsequent restrictions which he did not express in that treaty.'

"24. Moreover, when the Indian Government has really intended to retain to itself any unusual rights after the death of a present incumbent on a native throne, a clause to that effect has been clearly inserted in the treaty. I have no means here of quoting official documents but I know the fact, that in regard to the little State of Colaba, on the west coast of India, a clause was inserted, declaring that on the death of the then Rajah, without leaving a son to inherit the principality, it was to rest with the paramount State, whether an adoption was to be permitted or not.

"25. 'As Lord Hastings' treaty did not express any intention, or claim any right to meddle with the internal affairs of the Nagpore State after the Rajah should reach his majority, and as the treaty of Lord Amherst, in like manner, did not claim any such right when the Rajah had actually reached that age, it appears to me that we might very properly, in a case of this kind, consider another question, namely, 'What would have now been the course pursued by the Nagpore Durbar if the Resident had been at a great distance from Nagpore, without any one acting for him, and without our having any British troops stationed near the capital?'

"26. The case just described is one which has several times occurred at Hindoo Durbars in Malwa and Rajpootana within my own recollection, and the procedure in those cases, on the part of the families of a deceased Rajah, has always been that of adopting a boy, reporting the act to the Resident or the Governor-General's agent, and soliciting the confirmation of the paramount power. I cannot help believing that, if they had been similarly situated, the family would have acted in the same manner now; but they were naturally deterred from making any attempt of the kind, when they saw the British Resident at once take possession of the government, and order the British troops to be in readiness for any emergency that might occur. I need scarcely say that I am not imputing any blame to the Resident for what he did; on the contrary, he was strictly obeying the orders he had received. I only mean to say that, under such circumstances, it is impossible to expect that the Bhonsla family would venture to advance their claims, or express their wishes about an adoption, in a bold or even a distinct manner, unless they had been openly invited to do so by the British representative.

" 27 In fact, an invitation from the British representative to the widows and some of the principal men attached to the Rajah to state their claims openly, is the very course which, in cases of this kind, I should like to see followed. There might be conflicting claims, but after an open discussion of them, the paramount power would have full means of coming to a just decision in the matter.

" 28 In cases of hostility or treachery, or extreme and habitual internal misrule, I would as readily consent to the annexation of a native State to our own dominions as any servant of the East Indian Company could do, but I should like to see a marked difference in our measures towards allies who have been guilty of misconduct and those who have not been so. In this case the Bhonsla family have not even been accused of any serious misconduct, and under such circumstances, I cannot bring my mind to believe that we have any just right to disallow their claims to govern the Nagpore dominions, unless we had ascertained from them in a public and distinct manner that they were willing to renounce those claims. It appears to me that we are by no means entitled to assume, that they do not believe themselves to have a just right to adopt a successor to the Raj merely because they have hitherto, under very peculiar circumstances, abstained from openly asserting that right, or because the late Rajah refused to converse at all with the Resident on the subject of an adoption.

" 29 Let us bear in mind that the Rajah of Nagpore was only 47 years of age. Surely there was nothing extraordinary in his being vexed at any one seeming to suspect that he was unlikely ever to recover his health and become a father. There are thousands of men in all parts of the world, at a much more advanced age than 47, who would feel vexed with any person who insinuated such a probability, and many instances have been known among natives of high rank in India, solely from that sort of sensitiveness, refusing to allow any one, even a favourite daughter, to speak to them about adopting a son, although they were not only very old men, but had been for years afflicted with severe bodily diseases.

" 30 I may here remark that it might be fairly presumed that the late Rajah knew the custom of his country to be (as Sir Richard Jenkins has described it to be) that the principal widow in the family would adopt, in the event of his neither having a son of his own nor adopting one. But, above all, I contend that there was nothing unnatural in his refusing to discuss the subject of an adoption with the Resident, more especially as it appears that the latter never so much as hinted that his family after him would be sufferers in any way if he did not adopt, and still less did the Resident ever inform him, that we should seize the Nagpore country at his death if he did not adopt a son.

" 31 If the Rajah, in answer to the suggestions of the Resident, had spoken to this effect, viz, 'I don't choose to adopt, because, if I am not fated to have a son of my own, I don't care what becomes of my dominions, and the Company's Government is welcome to take them, provided that handsome provision be made for my wives and adherents,' we should have stood upon a very different footing from what we do now. But there was not the slightest

indication of any such feeling on the part of the late Rajah of Nagpore ; and the mere fact of his refusing to converse at all on a subject that was disagreeable to him, gives us no rights, according to my judgment, of any description whatsoever. It appears to me that, in a legal point of view, we are now, as regards Nagpore, precisely in the same position as if the Resident had never once spoken a word about adoption to the Rajah, and as if His Highness had been in the enjoyment of perfect health, and had lost his life, without a moment's notice, from a fit of apoplexy, or by a fall from his horse.

" 32. I now beg to notice some occurrences at Nagpore, which took place subsequent to the death of the late Rajah.

" 33. The death of the Rajah of Nagpore first became known to me by my having been obligingly allowed to see a private letter from Mr. Mansel, which mentioned that event, and some particulars respecting the general state of feeling among the people at Nagpore.

" 34. In that private letter I observed that Mr. Mansel alluded to the circumstance of 'the people about the court' being desirous that an adoption should take place of a successor to the throne.

" 35. A few days afterwards there came an official letter to Government from Mr. Mansel, dated the 11th of December last, reporting the death of the Rajah, and various circumstances connected with his late illness and funeral, etc., but, in that first official report, no allusion was made to any one desiring an adoption. This struck me at the time as being an omission which ought to be supplied, and I made that remark accordingly to the Honourable Mr. Dorin ; but as the latter gentleman had just then received a demi-official letter from Mr. Mansel, stating that he would in a few days more send a long official report to Government on the state of affairs of Nagpore, I concluded that everything would be fully detailed in the report alluded to, and hence I saw no objection to the short letter of instructions then proposed to be addressed to the Resident, which was simply to the effect that he ought to preserve tranquillity, and not commit this Government in any way, as to succession or otherwise, pending further instructions, which would be issued to him on the return of the Governor-General to Calcutta.

" 36. Some days subsequently the expected official report from Nagpore duly arrived. It was a long despatch, but it did not contain an account of any conversations between the Resident and the people at the Durbar, respecting an adoption, or state on what grounds he had formed the opinion expressed in his original private letter, that the people about the court wished for an adoption.

" 37. That omission on the part of the Resident (if he did omit anything) made me regret that I had not, before the instructions to him were sent off, recorded a minute, similar in purport to one that I previously wrote, and showed to my colleagues, proposing that the Resident should be called upon to report precisely any communication that may have passed between him and any of the courtiers in regard to an adoption. I had cancelled my original minute the day after I wrote it, because, on reflection, I thought it wrong to allude in an official record to information which had reached me by a private letter being shown to me, which I had not obtained permission to make use of officially.

"38 I beg to state, however, that in the foregoing remarks, I am not imputing blame to the Resident for not having reported more specifically than he did, respecting any conversation that he may have had about adoption, because his despatch of the 14th of December is a long one describing many details of occurrences, and I doubt not that Mr Mansel thought that it contained everything that could be interesting to the Governor General in Council. It seems also probable that very little was said by any one to the Resident about an adoption. His act of at once taking possession of the State must have overawed everybody more or less while many persons may have inferred that that act, so similar to the first act of Sir Richard Jenkins when Appa Sahib was deposed, would be followed up in the same way, *viz*, by the elevation of a new Rajah on the receipt of orders from Calcutta.

'39 But be that as it may, it will be sufficient for my present purpose to make a few remarks on some of the circumstances which have been officially reported by the Resident.

"40 It is evident from the 33rd paragraph of the Resident's despatch, dated the 14th of December, that we had ascertained the fact, that many of the leading people about the Durbar do wish for an adoption because in that paragraph he states that 'Yeshwant Rao Aher Rao would decidedly be preferred by the mass of the courtiers to any other youth for the musnud, whether given to him adoption or grant from the Company'. And again in the 37th paragraph after describing the scheme of an adoption of a Rajah who should be bound by treaty to attend to the counsels of the Resident, he adds as follows *viz* 'I believe that an experiment like that which I have shadowed out would best satisfy the people placing them effectually under the shield of British protection, and leaving them to partial self government'.

"41 With respect to the widow Banka Bae it should be borne in mind, that although she is the very person who according to Hindoo usage would have taken the lead under ordinary circumstances in adopting a successor, yet that she must have been greatly overawed by the Resident taking immediate charge of the Government, and by the presence of a British army to support him; so that if any one had opposed him but nevertheless, her sentiments were as distinctly announced to the Resident as could possibly be expected from a native lady of rank, under such peculiar circumstances. I refer here to the concluding part of the 9th paragraph of Mr Mansel's despatch wherein he describes that Banka Bae volunteered not once only, but 'occasionally' (in other words several times) to express her hope that the interests of the Bhonslah family would continue to be interwoven with the Berar kingdom.

"42 I am convinced that the speech of the Banka Bae, above quoted, meant nothing else than to say, that her anxious desire is to be allowed to adopt a successor to the late Rajah and I therefore conceive that we are not entitled to assume that she is indifferent on the subject, or that she is ignorant of her rights, merely because she has not spoken out more plainly on this occasion.

'43 I also think it highly probable (but I don't of course state this as a positive opinion), that from the character which that old lady bears for intelligence and good sense, that she would readily and willingly have admitted of such

limitation (and eventual penalties also) to the power of an adopted Rajah being inserted into a new treaty as would have quite secured us against any serious future misgovernment.

"44. I much regret that I have written such long minutes on this occasion, thereby causing the trouble of their perusal to the Most Noble the Governor-General and others, which I should have been glad to have spared them; but unfortunately I have not the power to write in a more concise manner on a subject of this kind, and at the same time to show with distinctiveness the grounds on which I have formed my opinions, but I shall now bring these too lengthy observations to a close.

"45. Before doing so, however, I beg to copy in the margin\* an opinion recorded by the late Lord Metcalfe, in a minute dated the 28 of October 1837, when Lieutenant-Governor of the North Western Provinces. On the general subject of our interfering in such matters of interior management in Native States, I deem it to be one that ought to have great weight in our future dealings with our native allies (meaning, of course, those of them only who have duly acted up to their engagements with us), and I now conclude this minute by declaring that, adverting to all the facts and circumstances which I have described, it is my sincere and full belief that we have not either by the treaty or from any other cause, a legitimate right to annex the territory of Nagpore to the dominions of the East India Company.

"11 February 1854.

(Signed.) J. LOW."

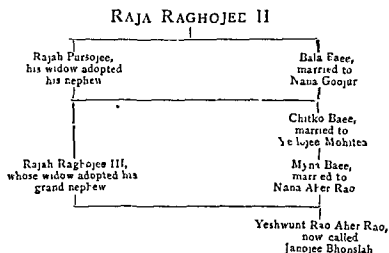
The following is a description of what really took place upon the sudden and unexpected death of the last Rajah of Nagpore.

Upon the death of the Rajah, a consultation was held by his family, when, acting on the advice of Her Highness the Banka Bae, the late Rajah's grandmother, who has always had the greatest influence in the Nagpore State, the widowed Ranees determined, as a mark of deference to the British Government, to delay the formal and irrevocable adoption of Yeshwunt Rao Aher Rao, the nearest male relative of the late Rajah, until reference had been made to the Governor-General at Calcutta. The Ranees had already adopted and chosen Yeshwunt Rao as their son on the day of the Rajah's death. Immediately after the Rajah's death their Highnesses the Banka Bae and Anpoorna Bae, the latter being the Rajah's senior widow, sent for Nana Aher Rao and his son, Yeshwunt Aher Rao, and in the presence of their relations Nana Aher Rao formally consented to resign his son to Anpoorna Bae. It was Yeshwunt Aher Rao who officiated at the funeral pile. The ceremony which they delayed out of deference to the British Government was the public procession with their adopted son, and the giving him a name.

It must be borne in mind that the choice of Yeshwunt Rao as the person to be adopted was not a matter of caprice, about which the Ranees might have disagreed. He was the nearest male relative of the late Rajah, and as such

\* "Those who are sovereign princes in their own right, and of the Hindoo religion, have, by Hindoo law, a right to adopt, to the exclusion of collateral heirs, or of the supposed reversionary right of the paramount power; the latter, in fact, in such cases having no real existence, except in the case of absolute want of heirs, and even then the right is only assumed in virtue of power, for it would probably be more consistent with right that the people of the state so situated should elect a sovereign for themselves."

the person whom by Hindoo law and Mahratta custom, the senior widow was obliged to choose. His mother, the Rajah's niece, Myna Bae, great-granddaughter of Raghojee II, was brought to the palace to give him birth. The event was announced by a salute of twenty-one guns, and his birth was formally announced to the British Resident. The Rajah gave orders regarding his education, appointed a special set of courtiers to attend upon the boy, seated him on all state occasions by his side, and in every possible manner showed that in the event of his, the Rajah, having no children, he regarded Yeshwunt Rao Aher Rao as his successor.



There was, as shown above, no doubt as to the person to be adopted. It is futile to contend that the Ranees were so blind to their own interest, and so indifferent as not to wish to adopt a successor to the throne.

They followed the advice of Her Highness the Banka Bae, which was to wait quietly for the orders of the Government before the Hindoo religious ceremony, which makes the adoption irrevocable, was completed. While these matters were being discussed, the Resident had ordered seals to be put on the Treasury and Jewel Office, and had otherwise taken measures for exercising all authority in his own person.

The Banka Bae still consistently advised entire submission. She had already several times seen the Nagpore State settled from Calcutta, and she hoped that the Ranees would be invited to express their wishes by the Supreme Government. Instead of this the fiat was issued. Nagpore was annexed, and the Ranees have in vain made repeated appeals against the decision, both in letters to the Governor-General, as well as by their Vakeels in Calcutta and in England. The fact of the province of Nagpore being annexed has been announced to the Ranees, the provision made for their support has been explained to them, and they have even been forbidden to continue the discussion of their rights.

Looking calmly at the manner in which the state of Nagpore has become a portion of British India, it is difficult to regard it as other than an exercise of the paramount power in support of what was considered by the Marquis of Dalhousie, the then Governor-General, a necessary policy. It is impossible to



deny that the Bhonslah family have suffered grievously by the exercise of this power, and it is important to examine what steps have hitherto been taken by the Government of India to compensate this family for the loss of their position as one of the substantive powers of India, which had been the rank assigned to them by the treaty of 1826, but of which, for state reasons, we now think it expedient to deprive them.

After the death of the Rajah of Nagpore, the following provision was made for the Ranees his wives, and for some of the principal ladies of the royal harem :—

1. To the Banka Baee, a stipend of 1,20,000 rupees per annum in consideration of her great age, her high rank, and her former position as regent of the kingdom :
2. To the eldest widow of the late Rajah, a life pension of 50,000 rupees :
3. To each of the other four widows 25,000 rupees :
4. To the widow of Appa Sahib, 10,000 rupees, and to other ladies of the zenana, 20,000 rupees, in all 1,80,000 rupees exclusive, and 3,00,000 rupees inclusive, of the pension of the Banka Baee.

From the very considerable personal property of the Rajah it was decided to allot to the Ranees jewels, furniture, and other articles suitable to their rank, and it was resolved to form the remainder into a fund, from which the pensions should be defrayed, the Government of India making up any deficiency.

Thus it was contemplated by the Court of Directors to provide liberally, without entailing serious expense upon the Company, for the Ranees and ladies of the royal harem of Nagpore during their lifetime, but the existence of any representative of the Bhonslah family was entirely ignored.

It here becomes necessary to point out that, in this respect, an unintentional injustice was being done, an injustice which has been clearly understood by the people of Nagpore, and by the native states of India, who watch with the most jealous and anxious interest the measures taken by the Government in all that regards the Native Royal Houses of India.

Since the ceremony of adoption, Yeshwunt Rao Aher Rao has, according to the Hindoo religious ceremonial, received the name of Janojee Bhonslah.

Janojee Bhonslah was, according to Hindoo law and Mahratta custom, the proper person to be adopted, being the lineal descendant of Raghojee II, and next of kin to the late Rajah.

Whatever may be the opinion regarding the right of the British Government, as the paramount power in India, to refuse to recognise an adoption entailing the right of succession to the sovereignty of Nagpore, it is at least certain, that granting this imperial prerogative to the fullest extent it cannot amount to more than a right to mediatise the principality, not to annihilate the family. Whatever restrictions over the descent of the sovereignty are enacted, the Bhonslah family must be allowed to have some law of inheritance. According to Hindoo law and Mahratta custom, Janojee Bhonslah is declared by them to be the next of kin, and heir to the late Rajah, and, as such, adopted by the widows. According

to English, European, and, it may be said, universal law, in default of direct descendants in the male line, he, the direct descendant in the female line, is the heir to all the titles, estates, and personal property of the late Rajah.

By what law, or semblance of law indeed, can he be excluded? It cannot be held that the Supreme Government is to adopt at once as much, and as little of Hindoo law as may suit its purpose, just so much as requires the form of adoption to render his relationship effective for succession, and just so little as enables the Government to forbid or disallow that adoption.

It must be remembered that, not only does Hindoo law, under certain circumstances, confer the right and obligation of adoption upon the widow but it also very clearly confers the right *to be adopted* upon the nearest relative whose parent consents to resign him. There is a right to be adopted as well as a right to adopt, and in the present case, there is not the shadow of a doubt as to the respective persons in whom these rights existed when the late Rajah died.

By the fact of his adoption Janojee Bhonslah has no share or interest whatever in the property of his natural father, Nana Aher Rao, and he is now left the actual head of the Bhonslah family, totally unprovided for, without any income from any source whatever, and with no prospect of any. It is true that the Ranees have been told that their adopted son may succeed to their private property. This leads naturally to an inquiry as to what private property the Ranees possess, and the manner in which the large personal property of the late Rajah has been seized by the late East India Company.

The Ranees are not in possession of any valuable property, except the portion of the late Rajah's jewels, and gold and silver plate, that was reserved for them when the bulk of the contents of the armoury and jewel office was sold by auction, or sent for sale to Calcutta in the beginning of 1855. The boxes of jewels on which the several Ranees' names were written, and which, during the late Rajah's lifetime, had been appropriated to their ordinary personal use, were reserved for the Ranees. Gold ornaments and silver plate, to the value of one lac and a quarter rupees, were also allotted to the use of the Ranees.

In all this there was an evident intention to be considerate, and to consult the feelings of the Ranees, but there was nothing to show that their legal right to any part of the valuables was recognised, no principle of distribution was laid down, so that the single order regarding the boxes on which their names were written bore the appearance of a free concession,—of a favour accorded, rather than of a discrimination between public and private property.

It must be remembered that on the Rajah's death, the valuables in the palace of Nagpore amounted, as realised by auction, to *twenty-six lacs of Company's rupees*. There was further found in the zenana of the palace—sums in ready money—Nagpore rupees, 4,16 663, and gold coins which sold for Nagpore rupees 8,750 and Company's rupees 2,76 282. These Nagpore rupees and gold coins formed the late Rajah's private treasure, the cash was deposited in the zenana apartments, and the accounts of receipts and disbursements of this department, during the last ten or fifteen years, have been kept by the special attendants of the Ranees.

No entry of the receipts and disbursements of this private treasure, no trace of its existence, is to be found in the public accounts of the country. It is difficult to conceive how this treasure could be more distinctly marked and noted as private family property.

Mr. Mansel, the Resident at Nagpore, thus writes regarding this private treasury :—"The private treasure, about 20 lacs (the jewels are said to be from 50 to 75 lacs Nagpore rupees in value; but I shall be pleased if on sale they yield the half of the former sum), and the household property (not above a lac in value, if we except stores that are being made available for public use), I would propose to leave with the family, to be disposed of by them in such way as may be most agreeable to their feelings, and as would be generally approved of by the courtiers and the native public. I apprehend that the general desire would be to throw the whole or the main part of the effects into a family fund, to be held by one representative, just as would be done in England in an entailed property, subordinate interests being provided for by a settlement. The right of the family by the female branch seems to be clearly quite as strong as by the male to every thing but the possession of those sovereign powers that a female can never well exercise, except in a constitutional government."

The Governor-General decided against this recommendation, and considered that the accumulated treasure found in the zenana was "public revenue hoarded by the late Rajah"; and, as such, available for the payment of the private debts of the late Rajah.

It may be presumptuous to give a legal opinion as to the rules by which the state property may be distinguished from the private wealth of an absolute sovereign, or to what extent the valuables in the palace of Nagpore may have been justly considered available assets for the payment of the state debts, and the debts of the late Rajah's household. On this latter point it will suffice to observe, that while all the state debts, including those of the Khasgee, amounted to only about six lacs and a half of Nagpore rupees, the sum realised by the various sales of palace property alone was upwards of twenty-six lacs of Company's rupees.

It may not be out of place to note, that in a precisely parallel case, *Kamachee Bae Sahiba, Ranees of Tanjore, versus The East India Company*, recently tried at Madras, the decision was in favour of the Ranees' claim, and contradicted the opinion laid down and acted upon by Lord Dalhousie in the case of the Nagpore Ranees, who have never ceased to protest against the seizure of the late Rajah's personal property and private treasure.

It has been shown that after deciding upon the annexation of the Province of Nagpore, the Ranees were left with life pensions, their own personal ornaments, and with a certain quantity of plate for their use. The fact that there was a lineal descendant of the late Rajah in existence, adopted according to Hindoo law and Mahratta custom as the representative of the Bhonslah family, has been entirely ignored; and that this representative, Janojee Bhonslah, has been left entirely unprovided for.

Of the pensions allotted to the Ranees, amounting to 3,00,000 rupees, which might be considered sufficient for the honourable maintenance of these royal ladies, while they were all alive and living together in the Nagpore palace, a

pension of 50,000 rupees per annum has lapsed by the death of the senior Ranee Anpoorna Bae, and 1,20,000, by the recent death of Her Highness the Banka Bae, so that there now remains for the support of the Ranees of Nagpur only 1,30,000 rupees. From this sum they have to provide for the maintenance of their adopted son, Janojee Bhonslah, recently married. And while the subject of the maintenance of these royal ladies is under notice, it may not be irrelevant to call attention to the state considered necessary to the dignity of a native royal family. These Ranees are obliged, according to the custom of the country to keep up numerous expensive establishments, and to afford support to families who for upwards of a hundred years have lived within the precincts of the palace as dependants of the royal family, expenses which though surprising and even repugnant to European notions, are a part of that oriental system which Britain, having assumed the paramount power in India, cannot suddenly and capriciously destroy.

To give some idea of the state which, for a time at least, must continue at Nagpore, a short account of the monthly expenses of the palace is here given.

1700 servants, including palace guard, at a cost of 7,000 rupees per mensem; elephants, camels employed in the palace service, 1,600, Bhonslahs and Bhonslins, being persons born in the palace, who receive food and clothing at a cost of 3,000 rupees per mensem.

The annual repairs of the palace, 25,000 rupees.

It should be further mentioned that the Ranees expended 25,000 rupees on the occasion of the marriage of their adopted son, Janojee Bhonslah.

The Ranees' debts already amount to 60,000 rupees, and unless some aid is speedily afforded, these royal ladies and Janojee Bhonslah, their heir and the representative of a royal race, will fall into a state of penury reflecting disgrace upon the Government of India and the British nation.

But these royal ladies and the family of the Bhonslahs have, since the annexation of Nagpore, acquired a fresh claim to the consideration of the Government, and with this claim the British people will feel the liveliest and most generous sympathy.

When the Bengal army mutinied in 1857, and the possession of India as an appanage of the Crown was in danger, the attention of all in India was attracted to the unprotected condition of the recently annexed province of Nagpore, to the neighbouring state of Hyderabad, and to the Carnatic and Deccan.

There were all the elements favourable to a rebellion in existence at Nagpore,—a recent annexation of more than questionable justice, an historical family extinguished by the fiat of the East India Company, although an undoubted representative of the late Rajah was alive, a large force of the late Rajah's troops recently brought under a discipline distasteful to them, a native aristocracy who had lost, with the native sovereign, their importance and their privileges, the country denuded of European troops, the Madras native regiments at Kamptee twelve miles distant from Nagpore, being the only troops available for the maintenance of the British authority, and anxiously looking to the conduct which would be followed by the Nizam of Hyderabad, and among whom emissaries from Bengal were already at work.

In the month of June, July, and August last, the Banka Bae, once the Regent of Nagpore, could, with one word, have raised the whole country against us, from her palace at Nagpore to the city of Hyderabad and to Sattara. Her name was known far and wide in the Deccan, and carried with it the attraction of a character for wisdom, generosity, and good fortune. The Bhonslah family still possessed their ancestral landed property in the Zillahs of Poonah, Sattara, Sholapore, and Ahmednuggur. Many of the late Rajah's relations and dependants also have estates and other interests in these districts, in Berar, and the Hyderabad country; and thus a constant intercourse with the homes of the Mahratta was kept up. The events of 1857 at Poonah, Sattara, Kolapore, and other places, and many uneasy symptoms in various parts of the Deccan, afforded sure indications of what the temper of the time was. There is not the slightest doubt that at Nagpore all were ready for action. The persons most dangerous from their wealth, rank, former power, and territorial influence, were quite prepared, on certain conditions, to throw their weight into the scale of rebellion.

They had counted their resources; they had secured the co-operation of the Nagpore Irregular Horse by means of the old superior commissioned officers, pensioned after the annexation of the province, and they had opened communication with the Madras troops at Kamptee. The murder of the Commissioner and the other English officers at Seetabuldee, and the seizure of the arsenal and treasury, were exploits easy of accomplishment; and it is more than probable that the Madras troops, after witnessing so substantial and striking a proof of our real weakness, would not have resisted the contagion. When once the die was cast, no effort, no expense would have been spared to seduce them from their allegiance. Emblems of royalty and religion, traditions, prophecies, and ancient war-cries, would have produced a violent excitement among these untamed and ignorant races, such as can scarcely be conceived by our more sober imaginations; and in a season of general agitation, the effect of such explosive elements is redoubled. The appearance in the field, at that critical period, of the flag and other insignia of the Bhonslah, would inevitably have secured the Madras troops to the cause of revolt. The news of a successful rising at Nagpore would have raised a whirlwind of exultation and fury at Hyderabad, that must have swept away the supporters of a peaceful policy. Nor would the Madras sepoys at Hyderabad have been slow to imitate their brethren at Nagpore. The flames of the first defection would soon have spread, and it would have been found that the Madras army was as open to the force of example, as incapable of resisting the madness of the herd, as the Bengal Army. Poonah, Sattara, Belgaum, Kolapore, Kurnool, and Cuddapah would all have responded to the impulse of Hyderabad and Nagpore. The Deccan and the Carnatic would have presented one scene of confusion and carnage.

This is not an imaginary picture. The communication of the troops at Kamptee with the most dangerous persons at Nagpore, the treasonable language of native officers and sepoys, their invitation to the Nagpore conspirators to begin the outbreak by some bold stroke and demonstration, and their promises to join in the movement on the first opportunity, are all matters of fact that admit of no doubt or dispute. Warnings of the uneasy temper of the Kamptee troops reached Nagpore before the detection of the Mussulman plot in the city and the Irregular Cavalry regiment. During the subsequent inquiry, conclusive

evidence on this point was elicited, and when all possible precautions had been taken, and the absence of immediate and imminent danger of an outbreak had been proved by the unresisted arrest and execution of the ringleaders, several persons, in consequence of the evidence above referred to, were very judiciously placed in arrest or under surveillance, and some of them were deported from the province.

From the terrible danger which must have been the result of a rising in the Deccan in 1857, we were saved by the masculine sense and rare loyalty of the Banka Bae. This royal lady has been looked upon, for the last forty years, as at once the venerated mother, and the good genius of the Bhonslah family and of the whole state of Nagpore. She is thought to have deserved, and to possess, the respect and esteem of the British Government and of all the British officers who have exercised power at Nagpore since 1818. To no individual living, not to the Nizam not to Salar Jung of Hyderabad, are we so much indebted as we are to this aged Princess. For while it is just possible, though not probable, that Nagpore under her influence might have remained quiet, although an outbreak took place at Hyderabad, it is not to be imagined for a moment that the turbulent spirits at Hyderabad would have failed to respond to the tidings of a *roman* being in the field, and successful at Nagpore, or that the Nizam and his minister could have withstood the outburst of insane enthusiasm that would have been called forth by so auspicious a beginning of revolt. At Nagpore all were ready and willing but no one felt any confidence while she forbade the movement her quiet but firm opposition discouraged, embarrassed, and baffled the boldest intriguers and conspirators, who remembered how Appa Sahib's discomfiture ruin and disgrace, had followed his defiance of her counsels in a similar political crisis. The majority of the late Rajah's relations and Maunkurrees were entirely guided by her directions, and implicitly obedient to her commands. Ten or twelve days before the detection of the Mussulmans conspiracy at Nagpore, a few days after the news of Delhi having been occupied by the mutineers was received, she strictly charged the highest in rank, and most important persons in each class of the dependants of the family, to keep no secrets from her, and to take part in no scheme that might bring discredit on "her city" (Nagpore), or lower her reputation (*neknahme*) with the British Government. She expressed her opinion that a difficult time was approaching, but that this was the time to show that their old friendship was not diminished, and she assured them that the Company's fortune (*ikbal*) would sooner or later overcome all resistance. As soon as the Musulman plot became known she summoned all the relations, Brahmins Sirdars, Mahratta and Musulman, Maunkurrees altogether between four and five hundred persons, threatened them with her severest displeasure and denounced against them the certain vengeance of Heaven if any of them dared to put themselves in opposition to Government, or to conceal any treasonable proceedings. She declared that if her own son had been concerned in the plot she would give him up to the Commissioner, and only ask that he should not be put to death. At this time no particulars of the conspiracy were known at Seetabuldee, no arrests had been made, and there was still great excitement in the city and its neighbourhood, in fact the danger was at its height. For nearly a month after this she made all the above-mentioned persons attend in the palace every day, in order to preserve her control over them and keep them out of mischief. These incessant injunctions,

warnings, and threats, the almost superstitious belief in her wisdom and foresight, and the example of her persistent hope and trust in the ultimate recognition by the British Government of her friendship and of the claims of her family, were the salvation of Southern India. The heavy debt which the Empire owes her for this eminent service, renders it most painful, after describing the excellent conduct of this venerable lady, to have to detail the extraordinary neglect which the Ranees of the late Rajah and their adopted son Janojee Bhonslah have experienced at the hands of the British authorities.

These royal ladies had, ever since the annexation of Nagpore, protested against the policy which deprived their family of that kingdom. They claimed the recognition of Janojee Bhonslah as their adopted son, and as representative of the Bhonslah family, and they had complained bitterly of the seizure of the late Rajah's personal property and of the private treasure accumulated in the palace zenana.

They sought various modes of redress, by sending their vakeels first to the Governor-General in Calcutta, and lastly to the Honourable the Court of Directors in England; but the invariable answer returned to them was that the annexation was an act that admitted of no discussion, and they were directed to address themselves in future, upon any other matters, to the Governor-General through the Commissioner of Nagpore.

As time wore on, although never entirely abandoning the hope that at some future time the kingdom of Nagpore would be restored to the Bhonslah family, the attention of the Ranees was directed to the totally unprovided condition of their adopted son Janojee Bhonslah. It was necessary that he should be married; and both on the occasion of his marriage, and on the previous occasion of his formally receiving the name of Bhonslah, they urged upon the Commissioner of Nagpore to recognise Janojee Bhonslah as their adopted son, and to obtain his recognition by the Supreme Government, and a provision suitable to his birth and his position as the representative of a royal race. The Commissioner, Mr. Plowden, treated the Ranees at first with consideration and kindness; he soothed their impatience, and at last, in December 1856, the Commissioner of Nagpore paid a visit to the palace, previous to his departure on circuit, and, on this occasion, *he formally promised the Banka Bae, and the other Ranees, who were all present behind the purdah, that he would apply to Government for the grant of a title and stipend to their adopted son, Janojee Bhonslah, who was himself, with the principal native Sirdars, present on this occasion.*

These promises greatly consoled the royal ladies; they felt that, at all events, they had found a protector of the name and race of the Bhonslahs, which had been virtually extinguished by the decision of the late Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie.

The proposal to the Government of India of a provision for their adopted son, Janojee Bhonslah, and for a suitable title, would, they felt, be accompanied by a detailed explanation of their circumstances by the Commissioner, and they also felt that they had everything to gain by the attention of the Government being directed to the question of the effects of the annexation of Nagpore.

The medium of communication between the Ranees of Nagpore and the Commissioner, on all ordinary matters, was Captain Evans Bell, of the 2nd Madras Europeans, who held the office of an Assistant Commissioner in the Nagpore Province, and of Assistant Agent to the Governor-General. It was in this latter capacity that Captain Bell was engaged, under the superintendence of the Commissioner, in directing all matters connected with the surviving members of the Nagpore Royal Family. To this officer was entrusted the payment of the Ranees' stipends and of the pensions to the relatives, courtiers, and dependants of the late Rajah. Captain Bell was also charged with the adjudication of numerous suits, in which the parties concerned were, from their high rank, exempted from the jurisdiction of the ordinary Civil Courts. From his official position, Captain Bell had the best opportunity of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the real circumstances connected with the annexation of Nagpore, and the hardships and grief endured by the Ranees, when, by the act of the late Governor-General, they saw the next of kin and heir to the late Rajah deprived of a kingdom to which, in accordance with Hindoo law and Mahratta custom and precedent, they felt he should have succeeded. He further saw how unreasonable and unpopular was the refusal to recognise Janjee Bhonslah at least as head of the family and heir to the personal property of the late Rajah, and how questionable was the right by which this valuable personal property, and the private treasury, had been appropriated by the East India Company.

Captain Bell through whose hands the payments of the Ranees' households were effected, and who thus knew the expenses necessary for their proper maintenance, became aware that the provision made for the Ranees was insufficient, and how impossible it would be for them to make any provision for their adopted son. Captain Bell communicated all these circumstances to the Commissioner, Mr. George Plowden, and *acting under his instructions*, prepared a report recommending that a title should be conferred on the adopted son of the late Rajah, and a separate provision made for him suitable to his rank, and that he should have the management and control of the palace establishments. After a considerable delay, Mr. Plowden visited the Ranees, and *pledged himself to recommend their adopted son, Janjee Bhonslah, to the Government of India for an honorary title and stipend*. Months passed on, until June 1857. The perilous position of Nagpore, and the admirable conduct of Her Highness the Banka Bacc during the rebellion, have already been described in detail.

Captain Evans Bell during the months previous to and subsequent to June 1857, never ceased to call the attention of the Commissioner to his formal promise to the Ranees of Nagpore, and to the good policy of keeping faith with so influential a family. A few days after the attempted outbreak at Nagpore, Captain Bell had been permitted by Mr. Plowden to go to the Ranees, and tell them that *he hoped within three months there would be some good news for them*. The Magistrate of Nagpore Mr. R. S. Ellis, who was in charge of the large native city of Nagpore, had, more than anyone, an opportunity of ascertaining how great was the danger at one time, and how entirely the safety of the city had depended upon the control exercised by Her Highness the Banka Bacc over the Mahratta population, and how entirely all her influence had been exercised in our favour for the maintenance of order, was in constant communication with the Banka Bacc and her relatives, and lost no opportunity, with the



knowledge and concurrence of Mr. Plowden, of expressing to Her Highness the gratitude felt by all the Europeans at Nagpore for her admirable conduct, and of assuring her that these facts would be made known to the Government by the Commissioner, as an additional claim on the part of the Bhonslah family to the consideration of the Government. It will appear incredible that the immediate danger at Nagpore having passed away, the Commissioner, Mr. George Plowden, entirely omitted to report to the Government of India the important assistance he had received from the Banka Bae of Nagpore. It would be difficult to explain this strange conduct on the part of the Commissioner of Nagpore, who is an officer of very considerable talents, if he had not, on former occasions, showed a most unaccountable disposition to procrastinate. So remarkable was this habit, that it drew upon Mr. Plowden the unenviable distinction of being the only public officer mentioned with blame by the late Governor-General Lord Dalhousie, who, in his final report of his labours,\* mentions with regret that he had been unable to decide upon the important question of the "Salt Monopoly," in consequence of the inordinate delays of Mr. George Plowden, who had been employed as a Special Commissioner to report on this subject.

To this fatal habit of procrastination must be attributed the false position in which the Government of India has been placed towards the Ranees of Nagpore, and the painful situation in which officers serving under Mr. Plowden are reduced, when they find that promises which he has allowed them to make in his name have remained unfulfilled and that they share with the Commissioner the reputation of having broken faith with natives who assisted British officers in the hour of need. For it is not only in the case of Janojee Bhonslah that Mr. George Plowden has delayed reporting to the Government meritorious services. The case of Captain Mahommed Tuffussool Hussain Khan will still further show how injurious to the public interests the Commissioner's apathy and procrastination have proved. This officer is the "Risaldar," or Native Commandant, of the Nagpore Mounted Police. He had, under the Government of the late Rajahs of Nagpore, been for thirty-six years a cavalry officer, and had repeatedly been noticed by Government for his fidelity to British interests. Latterly, the death of his son had driven him from active life, but though seriously ill, the mutinies found him at once ready for action. It was considered expedient to arrest some officers of the Irregular Cavalry which had mutinied. An armed resistance was expected, and means were adopted to meet a catastrophe, when Tuffussool Houssain begged as a favour that he might first exert his influence among the men. Accompanied by only one orderly, he personally arrested the four principal native officers of the Nagpore Irregular Cavalry, who were ringleaders in the plot, and by his bold demeanour and commanding eloquence checked the mutinous excitement among the troopers. His house was the rendezvous of all who were willing to discover or resist the plots of the disaffected, and the tranquillity of the native capital was owing in no mean degree to his personal exertions.

He, Captain Tuffussool Houssain, was considered so useful and influential a person, that he was appointed a Risaldar of police horse at Nagpore, and the Commissioner of the Province; through the Magistrate, Mr. Ellis, *promised that he should be recommended to the Government of India, for a substantial reward*

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\* Dated 28th February 1856. (Parliamentary Papers, East India, May 1856.)

*in the shape of a Fighiye, which would serve to maintain after his death his numerous family.* Up to the present time, no official notice whatever has been taken by Government of the eminent services rendered by Captain Tuffussool' Houssain Khan, and the promise made to him by the Commissioner remains unfulfilled.

It would be out of place here to give further instances of the neglect of great interest displayed by the Commissioner of Nagpore, but it may easily be asserted, that of no part of our possessions in India is the Government of India so ill-informed as of the territory of Nagpore.

Lord Dalhousie, in his minute advocating the policy of annexing the Province of Nagpore, lays especial stress (*vide* paragraph 32) upon the importance of the country as affording a secure supply of that one item, upon which the prosperity of the manufacturers of England mainly depends,—the staple article of cotton wool.\* The great impediment to securing, at a moderate cost, the supply of this article, was the heavy, complicated, and oppressive transit duties upon this article levied through the Provinces of Nagpore and Hyderabad.

It will hardly be believed that these transit dues are still, after five years possession by the British Government, levied in the Province of Nagpore, and that no scheme has been, as far as can be known, prepared by the Commissioner of Nagpore, and laid before the Government of India, for the abolition of this oppressive and destructive source of revenue.

It is unnecessary to point out in detail the evil effects of this known habit of procrastination on the efforts made by the zealous officers serving under Mr. Plowden, in Nagpore, in their endeavours to administer beneficially the districts committed to their charge, and how disheartening the knowledge that the most carefully prepared schemes for local improvements, which seriously affect the well-being of the people of the country, are laid aside for consideration at some future moment which never arrives.

But there is one officer, who has so honourably and with such earnest perseverance endeavoured to prevent Mr. George Plowden bringing the disgrace of broken faith and ingratitude on the British Government, and who has suffered so much injustice at the hands of the Commissioner, that it is important that both his services and the treatment he has received should not remain unknown. Captain Evans-Bell's position, in connection with the Ranees of Nagpore, has been explained above. For months Captain Bell, by his never-failing courtesy and kindness to all connected with the late Rajah's family, was able to console these unfortunate persons, and to reconcile them to waiting for the fulfilment of the Commissioner's promises; but when these royal ladies commenced to reproach him (Captain Bell) with having deceived them, Captain Bell pointed out to the Commissioner how painfully he was situated, and how impossible it was for him to continue in his office of Assistant Agent to the Governor-General when solemn engagements made by the Commissioner of Nagpore, and repeatedly affirmed by him (Captain Bell), as Mr. Plowden's deputy, were broken through, without one word of explanation, except that a press of business prevented the

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\* Parliamentary Papers, Rajah of Berar, July 1854.

Government from considering the claims of the Ranees of Nagpore. Captain Bell, finding all remonstrance with Mr. Plowden useless, has directly addressed the Government of India upon the subject of this neglect on the part of the Commissioner of Nagpore. It required real moral courage, in a junior officer, to break through the strict rules of Indian etiquette, and thus to assume the responsibility of bringing grave charges against his superior. Captain Bell has been, however, in some measure supported in this line of conduct by the consideration that he was permitted by the Government to remain in his office, and that thus a tacit approval of his conduct was accorded to him: The Commissioner of Nagpore, although Captain Bell forwarded to him copies of all the letters sent by him to the Government, was unable to shake off his incredible apathy sufficiently to report upon these important matters to the Government of India.

It is only within the last few months that Mr. Plowden, to get rid of these disagreeable communications to the Government, of which he always received copies from Captain Bell, and in which he saw his own official conduct so severely and so justly described, relieved Captain Bell of his palace duties, which for a short time he exercised himself and afterwards delegated to his assistant Captain Shakespear. Captain Bell, in the meantime, was employed as a joint Magistrate of the Nagpore district, but never ceased to watch over the interests of the Ranees of Nagpore, and from time to time to fulfil his distasteful duty of informing the Government of the continued neglect of the Commissioner. He was, however, no longer the channel of communication between the Ranees and the Commissioner, and day by day these royal ladies saw all chance of their case being submitted to Government more and more remote.

On the 7th September 1858, an event occurred which all persons had been expecting for some time past. This was the death of Her Highness the Banka Baee of Nagpore, widow of the Rajah who fought against us at Assaye and Argaum herself once regent of the kingdom of Nagpore and ever the fast friend and ally of the British Government. The valuable aid afforded by this illustrious lady in 1857 to the support of the British authority in Nagpore has already been described, and none of those who had an opportunity of knowing how bitterly grieved and disappointed this venerable princess had been at the treatment she had received from Mr. Plowden; can fail to feel indignant at his conduct, or acquit him of the serious reproach of having embittered the last moments of her to whom the British Government owed the safety of the south of British India; and to whom the British officers in Nagpore are indebted for their own safety and the preservation of the lives of their wives and children.

In August 1858, shortly before her death, Her Highness had addressed the following letter to Mr. Plowden, reminding him of the repeated promises which he had made to herself and her royal relatives, pointing out the long and fruitless efforts which they had made, acting upon his advice, to obtain a hearing both at Calcutta and in England, and how dispirited they felt at the neglect from which they had so long and patiently suffered.

## TRANSLATION.

## I.

Her highness the Banka Bae's zaban-Bundee, or verbal statement, dated the 9th August 1858, and presented to the Commissioner of Nagpore, by a deputation consisting of Purbhut Rao Goojur, Trimbuckjee Nana Aher Rao, Baherjee Sirkya, and Govind Rao Furnavees, on the 10th idem.

A thousand thousand thanks to the Creator of the heavens and earth, that ever since the princes and nobles of all India, and especially of this principality, have been reduced to obedience, the British Government has never, until now ceased to extend to them its generosity and its protection. From the first, the chiefs of this principality have performed all that has been commanded. Moreover, ever since the death of the late Rajah the English officers have constantly advised us to this effect, that it would be to our advantage to be obedient to all the orders of Government. And, indeed, my desire always was, and is, to act under the instructions of that August Government. By command of the Officiating Commissioner, Major Edward King Elliot, I delivered up with a cheerful countenance all the treasures, gold and jewels, cash and goods, weapons, cattle, and in short everything that was in our possession, and devoted them to the will and pleasure of the British Government. For I thought that when our right became manifest, all this wealth, gold and jewels, and other property, would be restored, according to old custom; as in the rebellion of 1818, when Mr Jenkins, the Resident, took all the treasures into his own possession, and restored them to us on the re-establishment of the sovereignty. I therefore gave up everything to the persons appointed by the Officiating Commissioner; I was quite confident, and remain so, that the Honourable Company would never begrudge us our principality, but that it would be settled according to our wishes upon the rightful heir, our son Janojee Bhonslah, who at the time of the late Rajah's death, by the permission of Mr. Mansel, and with the unanimous consent of the members of our family, and the Counsellors of the State, and again at the death of the late Ranee Anpoorna Bae, with the knowledge and permission of Mr. George Plowden, the Commissioner, was, with every usual ceremony, adopted and recognised as the heir.

But when the officers of the British Government began to make use of the most extraordinary language to me on this subject, I then perceived, and became certain, that some officials, by improper explanations and persuasions, had disposed the Supreme Government to ruin our sovereignty, and to abolish our rights. But even then I reflected in my own mind, that the British Government is not inclined to do injustice; and by what law, or by what principle of justice, can our right be converted into a wrong? At last the Commissioner said to us that nothing could be done by him, but that *we might send our wakeels to the Capital, and ask for justice*. Seeing no other course open to us, with the permission of the Officiating Commissioner, we decided on sending wakeels. After the wakeels had been sent on their missions, the Officiating Commissioner said: "You cannot be allowed to remain in the palace, and make plans for sending wakeels; for by sending wakeels it becomes evident that you are intent upon making a disturbance." These expressions were not worthy of our ancient friend-

ship with the British Government; but such was our destiny. As our good-will and amity have been known from the first unto this day, I may observe that the only reason for sending wakeels was, that when the heir to this sovereignty was actually present,—the grand-nephew of the late Raja, and in every respect the rightful representative,—we were told that the sovereignty had lapsed for want of an heir. For nineteen months our wakeel remained at Calcutta, but never succeeded in obtaining an interview with the great lord, the Governor-General. After this *the order was given that we should withdraw our wakeels*, and make all our petitions and statements through the Commissioner. We submitted to this order also; recalled our wakeels, and put our claims before Mr. Plowden; and from that day the Commissioner has offered us much consolation; and with the proper feeling of his position has always shown the greatest attention and kindness to our son; and at our wish assisted at his marriage. And the Commissioner has frequently said to us that *we should be perfectly easy in our minds, for that in a few days he would write a full account of our affairs to the Capital*. By reassuring expressions of this sort our hearts were comforted; and we felt certain that by the Commissioner's explanation of our cause and description of our fidelity, the members of Government, who are worshippers of God and lovers of the right, would be quite convinced, and that the heir to the sovereignty would obtain his inheritance. We were quite sure that the delay and postponement in the settlement of our affairs, had only arisen from the previous incorrect representations of some officers, but that the Government was just, and when the case was understood, would redress our wrongs. Eighteen months, however, have passed away, and no change is yet apparent. Having no alternative before us, we have therefore, with the permission of the Commissioner, written two letters explaining fully our wishes to the enlightened mind of his Lordship the Governor-General, and we presented them to the Commissioner. *Doubtless they have been forwarded, and all our affairs have thus been made known, but up to this day no answer has been given to us*. Therefore it is a great source of grief and anxiety to me, as I have now arrived at the age of eighty years, and cannot hope to live much longer lest my desire of seeing my son established according to ancient custom, as the late Rajah was, should not be fulfilled in my life-time. For now my son is of full age, and able to do his duty under the supreme Government, and according to Mahratta custom and by the Hindoo law of the Dhurum Shaster, and by consanguinity to the former Rajahs, he is the heir. And I still have a strong hope that by your noble qualities and the magnanimity of the Government, my son will be established and exalted: Thus, trusting in the ancient friendship of the Honourable Company and resigned to the will of God, I have remained patient and composed.

The statement which I gave to Major Elliot also remains without a reply.

God is my witness that during the last year my greatest grief has been that I and my son, on account of our poverty and powerless state, have been unable to afford any important service or to give material assistance to Government. But setting aside our helplessness, we, with all our relations, were ready and prepared to show our obedience and devotion: all the officers who have been connected with this country know our good-will, and I need say no more on that point.

I have written this short account of our sad weak condition, and sent it to you that you may read it with attention and assist us, so that the English Company, which rules over the whole land, may be induced to have compassion on the widow, and paying respect to the line of descent and to ancient principles may restore our family to its former and even to a more exalted position, by which means the name and glory of the Company will be spread abroad, and we, its dependants and adherents, may obtain our desire, and for ever pray for its prosperity and power

Dated the 9th of August 1858

## II.

*Letter from Her Highness the Banka Bae to the Commissioner of Nagpore dated the 14th of August 1858*

To Mr George Plowden, the friendly and kind Commissioner, ever gracious to this humble person, may his benignity be increased

After the usual compliments, Trimbuckjee Nana Aher Rao, Purbhut Rao Gujur Baherjee Sirkya and also Govind Rao Furnavees were sent to wait upon you by me, and I have heard from them all that you were pleased to say, viz, that whenever you visit me I speak to you about regaining the sovereignty and the state property, and that Nana Aher Rao also mentions the subject, and that these questions are extremely objectionable, because the Government has strictly directed that no application for the sovereignty is to be heard, and that for this reason whatever khureetas, letters and written statements have been presented to you by us, cannot be forwarded to the Supreme Government and that you hope I will never speak to you on this subject again that if we, the Ranees, wish to appeal to Government or to Parliament regarding the principality we are at liberty to do so by means of wakeels, and that you do not forbid such applications

This suggestion has been clearly and fully understood by me I wish to remark that, from first to last my intention has been that my dear son Baba Sahib (Janojee Bhonslah), who is the rightful heir to this principality, should ask for consideration and for justice from Government and from Parliament through no channel but you—no other channel has been or is preferred by me. And since you arrived here by God's favour, to be the administrator and ruler of this country, you have repeatedly stated that you would carefully explain our condition to the Supreme Government, you have acknowledged that, now and formerly, nothing but obedience and submission to the orders of Government has been found in my proceedings that nothing has ever been perceived in my conduct inconsistent with friendship to the Honourable Company that please God you would write to the Supreme Government and explain that no fault had been committed by us and that you had well ascertained the fact that our misfortunes had been occasioned by the improper explanations and arguments of some of the members of Government Besides this, when visiting us, you have often said that you would write an account of all our claims to Government

I am confident that the purity of my heart is well known to all officers who have been connected with this country, and especially to you because, on the day of the mutiny at this place I offered my own personal services with those of my family, and I sent my relative Trimbuckjee Nana Aher Rao, in company

with Mr. Robert Ellis and Captain Bell, the assistant agent, to attend upon you, and on that day you said that there could be no doubt of my friendship, and that you would write a full account to Government of my good will and obedience. Trusting in these assurances, I have consoled my broken heart with the hope, that in a short time by your kind assistance, our rights would be restored. In this hope I have reposed until this day, resigned to the will of God, and praying for the British Government. But gratified as I was with your good opinion, I was still desirous that you should make it known also to the Supreme Government. *It would be most satisfactory if you would write once for all an account of all these matters to Government especially those that have fallen under your own observation and procure us a distinct answer. Then you could with the greatest propriety say to us, "I have written your representations to Government, and here is the answer".* It is most becoming and advisable that you should write, and after that our destiny will be fulfilled; but you now plainly reply to us that we may send our wakeels to Parliament, and ask for justice. Even to these instructions we can submit; but we hope that Government will advance us funds for the expenses of such an appeal. If this cannot be done we will provide funds by disposing of the jewels and gold that still remain in our possession. But on this point I am very anxious lest we should be acting contrary to the wishes of the Supreme Government, because the order was given that we were to make all our demands and petitions through the channel of the Commissioner.

Dated the 14th August 1858.

Sent by the humble Banka Bae Sahiba.

This was the last official note addressed by Her Highness to Mr. Plowden.

In her last moments the Banka Bae displayed the same calm dignity which ever marked her conduct in prosperity and adversity. When she felt that the hour of death was drawing near, she sent for Mr. Plowden to make known to him, as the representative of the British Government, her last wishes. He attended at the palace accompanied by some European officers and was then solemnly reminded by the dying queen of the many proofs of friendship and fidelity to the Company's Government given by herself and the late Rajah; and she added her favourite expression, "than nothing had occurred to break that friendship, and that she felt that all the wealth and emblems of power and royalty that had been taken from the palace were in deposit with the British Government, and that when they thought fit they would return them" and that "she should die with a firm trust in their justice and generosity". She then placed her adopted son Janojee Bhonslah's hand in that of the Commissioner, and recommended him to the protection of Government in the most solemn manner.

A few hours after this affecting scene, her Royal Highness died, without the barest acknowledgment that the Queen of Great Britain, her feudal sovereign, approved her loyalty and good faith. It will be believed that Mr. Plowden's habits of neglect and procrastination are hopelessly confirmed when it is known that even the death of the Banka Bae failed to rouse him from the determined silence which he has observed towards the Supreme Government regarding the family of the late Rajah of Nagpore; and that, in spite of his public promise that their case should be favourably reported, he is believed never to have taken any steps to lay their claims before the Government.

It is a curious fact, that the event of Her Highness' death, and the circumstances attending it, were communicated by a private individual in London to the Secretary of State for India, who had, until he received the information from this source, been entirely ignorant of the decease of the distinguished Princess, to whose loyalty and good faith Britain owes the safety of a great portion of her Indian Empire.

It is gratifying here to state that the Government of Lord Stanley had already determined to cordially recognise Her Highness's eminent services, but the despatch from London, which ordered this proper but tardy justice did not reach India until the Banka Bae had, at the ripe age of 81 years, been gathered to her fathers.

The removal of Captain Evans Bell from the office of Assistant Agent to the Governor-General naturally impressed the surviving Ranees very painfully, and the conduct of his successor, Captain Shakespear, appears to have made these ladies consider that the respect and courtesy which had hitherto been shown them was withdrawn, for they thought it necessary to address to Mr. Plowden a letter of complaint.

### III.

*Note, addressed by the three Ranees, Durya Bae, Anunda Bae, and Kamulja Bae, to the Commissioner of Nagpore, dated the 12th February 1859.*

To Mr. George Plowden, the friendly and kind Commissioner, granter of favours to his friends, may his benignity be increased.

After the usual salutations, be it known to your enlightened mind that on the 2nd instant we sent a note to your address, and another to the assistant agent, Captain Shakespear. *The assistant agent returned the note to us, after having torn the upper part of the sheet of paper; and up to this time we have received no answer from you, and you have not paid us a visit.* Thus there appears no other course open to us but to address this note to you, for we have suffered as much as we can endure, and in every respect our troubles continue as great as before; we shall therefore make a distinct and detailed statement of our condition. On the 17th of last January we sent you a full explanation of our state in a note of that date, but although you heard all that we had to say, your verbal answer was by no means satisfactory. We have once more to repeat all our former statements and to submit them in the present note for your consideration.

Let it be remembered that, according to the orders that were given, we recalled our wakeels from the capital, and having in every possible respect consulted your wishes, we ourselves addressed you in our own persons, and through our agents, on the subject of our claims, and we have forwarded to you several khurreetas for transmission to his Excellency the Governor-General. Doubtless they have been duly delivered to his Excellency but up to this day we have not been honoured with an answer. Hoping for some information on this subject, we are now compelled to give you this trouble, for in fact, except some conversation between us and you, nothing has been done in this matter. We must entreat that you will call to mind that *you yourself, and your assistants, Captain Crichton and Captain Bell, have made verbal promises, and have sent*



notes, saying that our past troubles and our complete innocence should be distinctly communicated to Government; and that the Government was considerate and just, and *would make a settlement suitable to our rank and position.*

Moreover in the year 1857, Mr. Robert Ellis, who was then Deputy Commissioner of Nagpore, and Captain Bell, came by your directions and made similar promises to us in the most emphatic manner. We have always been well wishers and firm friends (to the British Government), and we still are so; no disobedience has ever been heard of, nothing but good-will and devotion has ever been perceived in our conduct. These facts are known to you, and to all officers and gentlemen at Nagpore, and at the cantonment of Kamptee, and in the other districts; and especially that at the beginning of the Delhi rebellion, her late Highness, the revered Banka Baee, called all her family round her, and strictly charged them that, although so many chieftains in India had rebelled against the British Government, they should remain prepared to assist and to devote themselves for the Government with their lives and property: and she said, "Let it not be that our ancient cordiality and eternal good-will should be destroyed." Having said this she sent several of our relations to attend upon you; and in short, rendered assistance to the best of her ability; and the result and return of her fidelity and exertions are, that from the 2nd instant we can see no prospect before us but that of starvation; that even oil for our lamps is not procurable, darkness is in the whole palace, and our servants are fasting while they work. Up to this day there is no appearance of a settlement, and you have not obtained any answer whatever to our khurreetas. And besides this, the stipends of many members of our family are suspended. And *the Assistant Agent sent us a note by the hand of a low Kayath writer*, telling us that Rupees 7,000 per mensem were fixed for our support; and this writer read the note to us in a most improper manner, and presumed also to ask us questions. It now appears therefore that even our honour, which we have preserved so far, is about to be attacked. And the note which we sent to ask the Assistant Agent to pay us a visit, that gentleman tore and returned to us. This is a suitable event for the time! But it is hardly consistent with justice.

We had hoped that when the administration of the English Company had ceased, and the direct Royal rule of the Queen,—may her shadow be increased!—was instituted, we should at last obtain the consideration we desire, and that the settlement of our son, Janojee Bhonslah, would be made. On the contrary, attacks are now made on our honour and dignity. At such a crisis, therefore, we have thought it right once more to recapitulate our claims, and to ask once more for your consideration. Let it be known that we ask for no monthly stipend, neither one anna, nor a lakh of rupees; we ask for nothing from the Government but our principality, the heir to which is present with us. Our ancient friendship is still existing. We therefore hope that you will procure for us some answer to all the khurreetas and letters that we have addressed to the Governor-General through you; and we must beg that, without our express request, you will not interfere with the Natusalas (concubines) of our zenana, for our honour, and the honour and memory of the late Rajah, are hereby endangered. We are your daughters; and you are our father; we are quite sure that you feel a regard for our

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### III

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Moreover in the year 1857, Mr. Robert Ellis, who was then Deputy Commissioner of Nagpore, and Captain Bell, came by your directions and made similar promises to us in the most emphatic manner. We have always been well wishers and firm friends (to the British Government), and we still are so; no disobedience has ever been heard of, nothing but good-will and devotion has ever been perceived in our conduct. These facts are known to you, and to all officers and gentlemen at Nagpore, and at the cantonment of Kamptee, and in the other districts; and especially that at the beginning of the Delhi rebellion, her late Highness, the revered Banka Bae, called all her family round her, and strictly charged them that, although so many chieftains in India had rebelled against the British Government, they should remain prepared to assist and to devote themselves for the Government with their lives and property: and she said, "Let it not be that our ancient cordiality and eternal good-will should be destroyed." Having said this she sent several of our relations to attend upon you; and in short, rendered assistance to the best of her ability; and the result and return of her fidelity and exertions are, that from the 2nd instant we can see no prospect before us but that of starvation; that even oil for our lamps is not procurable, darkness is in the whole palace, and our servants are fasting while they work. Up to this day there is no appearance of a settlement, and you have not obtained any answer whatever to our khurreetas. And besides this, the stipends of many members of our family are suspended. And *the Assistant Agent sent us a note by the hand of a low Kayath writer*, telling us that Rupees 7,000 per mensem were fixed for our support; and this writer read the note to us in a most improper manner, and presumed also to ask us questions. It now appears therefore that even our honour, which we have preserved so far, is about to be attacked. And the note which we sent to ask the Assistant Agent to pay us a visit, that gentleman tore and returned to us. This is a suitable event for the time! But it is hardly consistent with justice.

We had hoped that when the administration of the English Company had ceased, and the direct Royal rule of the Queen,—may her shadow be increased!—was instituted, we should at last obtain the consideration we desire, and that the settlement of our son, Janojee Bhonslah, would be made. On the contrary, attacks are now made on our honour and dignity. At such a crisis, therefore, we have thought it right once more to recapitulate our claims, and to ask once more for your consideration. Let it be known that we ask for no monthly stipend, neither one anna, nor a lakh of rupees; we ask for nothing from the Government but our principality, the heir to which is present with us. Our ancient friendship is still existing. We therefore hope that you will procure for us some answer to all the khurreetas and letters that we have addressed to the Governor-General through you; and we must beg that, without our express request, you will not interfere with the Natusalas (concubines) of our zenana, for our honour, and the honour and memory of the late Rajah, are hereby endangered. We are your daughters; and you are our father; we are quite sure that you feel a regard for our

honour, and we feel that we have no protector but you. It is therefore becoming and proper that until some order arrives from the Governor-General, there shall be no further encroachments on our dignity

There is yet one more request to be made, which is, that you will, as soon as possible, oblige us with a visit at the palace; it will then be known that the ancient friendship is undisturbed.

Dated the 12th February 1859.

A letter to Captain Evans Bell was also sent, in which they reproach that officer with the non-fulfilment of the Commissioner's promises, repeated to them by Captain Bell. They remind him of the many encouragements to patience and to confidence in the British Government's consideration held out to them during the rebellion of 1857, both by himself and by the Magistrate of Nagpore, Mr. R. S. Ellis.

#### IV.

*Note addressed by the three Ranees, Durya Bae, Anunda Bae, and Kamulja Bae, to Captain Bell, dated the 13th February 1859.*

To the kind and friendly Captain Thomas Evans Bell; may his benevolence continue for ever.

After the usual salutations, this is what we have to say.—Formerly, you were for long time in charge of the palace establishment, and became well acquainted with our affairs; and you must remember how many speeches you made to us and to our agents, in the strongest terms, and what promises you made at several visits. It is quite unnecessary for us to write about them. But especially when the rebellion broke out in Hindostan, how many solemn protestations you made that the Government would provide for us handsomely, and that the sovereignty would be settled on the heir. And you know also what Mr. Robert Ellis, Deputy Commissioner of Nagpore, said to us.\* At present we are in great distress, so that even oil for our lamps is not procurable; and no one seems to be taking the slightest interest in our welfare. At last, knowing no alternative, we have written and sent a note to the Commissioner, and we now send a copy of it with this note to you; by its perusal all will be explained to your benevolent mind.

Is this the result of your solemn protestations, that a period of starvation approaches, and that Rupees 7,000 per mensem are fixed for the palace expenses, and that the stipends of many members of our family are suspended? We have sent you this note that you may understand the abovementioned matters, for you also made solemn and emphatic protestations that Rupees 7,000 per mensem would be settled and that the stipends of the family should not be stopped.† We wish, therefore, to remind you of these solemn protestations and engagements which you made with the most binding pledges and to bring to your notice that this is the result of them. Where is the settlement of the inheritance? Even food and clothes are now obtained with difficulty.

\* Mr. Ellis and Captain Bell made no such promise. Some allowance must be made for Oriental exaggeration.

† There is some confusion here.

It is right that you should pay some attention to these promises, and at once pay us a visit at the palace. It is most becoming that you use your best endeavours in behalf of these forlorn widows; what more shall be written except wishes for your prosperity?

Dated the 13th February 1859.

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Following this letter the Ranees sent a verbal message to Captain Bell, intimating to him that as a means to bring matters to a crisis they intended coming and pitching their tents either in Captain Bell's or in the Commissioner's gardens; in short, that they would follow the native custom of sitting "dharna" at the gate until they could obtain justice.

To any one acquainted with eastern customs, it is unnecessary to explain the import of this threat, although it may probably sound comparatively harmless to European ears. A greater scandal and disgrace to the British Government could, however, hardly be conceived; and when it is remembered that these ladies, who could not obtain a bare hearing of their case, had recently been our generous allies loyally co-operating with the Government during the crisis of 1857 it certainly does not appear strange that the Ranees should evince some indignation at the treatment they received at Mr. Plowden's hands. In order to avoid so great a scandal, Captain Bell went at once to the palace and in a long interview with these Royal ladies endeavoured to console them, and to assure them that the strong claims of their adopted son, and the old friendship of the family so strongly manifested by the Banka Baee, would receive the most generous consideration by the British Government.

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*Minute of a conversation between Captain Evans Bell and the Ranees of Nagpore, at about half-past four p. m. on the 14th February 1859. Officially reported to Government by Captain Bell.*

After the usual salutations, I commenced by saying that I had received the Ranees' note, accompanied by the copy of a note they had sent yesterday to the Commissioner; that I was much honoured by the communication, but at the same time much grieved.

Anunda Baee said that she could not understand why I should be grieved or should express astonishment at the note that I had made a hundred promises, and that instead of their condition being improved, every day seemed to bring them some new trouble or insult, etc., etc.

I said that they should remember that I had repeatedly said to them that there might be many causes for delay, of which neither they nor myself could form an opinion, but that although a long time had certainly elapsed they ought not to doubt the Commissioner; that the Commissioner had not and would not forget the promises made to the Banka Baee and to them or the strong proofs of friendship they had given last year. That there was no reason for them to lose patience or hope.

I was frequently interrupted by the Ranees, and had to say the same thing several times over, throughout the interview.

Durya Bae said that she could no longer believe that we had any kind intentions towards them, that a low Kayath Mohurir had been sent to read a note to her like a \*purvana telling her and the other Ranees to accept of Rs. 7,000 per mensem and to expect nothing more: they wanted nothing for themselves but all for their son (Janojee Bhonslah) who was present; however, it was impossible to live on their present means, that they had not oil for their lamps, etc.

I begged them not to enter into these particulars observing that only Rs. 7,000 were sanctioned at present, and that they must wait patiently for the orders of the Governor-General. I said that I was speaking as a private person, and without any authority; but from my knowledge of the customs and practice of the British Government, I felt perfectly certain and confident that the strong claims of their adopted son, and the old friendship of the family, so strongly manifested by the Banka Bae, would receive the most generous consideration, and that a settlement suitable to their dignity and to the honour of the British Government would be made.

As they appeared disposed to speak much more warmly, and I had said all that I intended, I took my leave, saying that I would report to the Commissioner all that had passed.

(Signed) T. EVANS BELL.

Captain Bell at once reported to the Foreign Secretary to Government at Calcutta the fact of this interview, and what had taken place thereat, and suggested that some hint should be given to the Ranees of the feelings and intentions of the Government towards them: Captain Bell added, that even an authoritative and final discountenance of their hopes would be far preferable to the state of distress and suspense and petty annoyances to which they had been subjected since the death of Her Highness the Banka Bae.

Mr. Plowden received a copy of this communication, and at once proceeded in severe terms to blame Captain Bell for his visit to the Ranees, and for his attempts to console them. Mr. Plowden desired Captain Bell not again to visit the Ranees, and threatened him with suspension from his office as an Assistant Commissioner in the Nagpore province, unless he promised to hold no further communication with the Ranees, their relations or any one connected with the palace.

The Commissioner also sent for the nearest relatives and immediate personal attendants of the Ranees and ordered them in severe and threatening terms not to visit Captain Bell. The want of judgment and courtesy shown in this treatment of natives of high rank, and great respectability must naturally have been severely felt by all the Royal Family of Nagpore.

The disgrace reflected on Her Majesty's Government by this unworthy conduct of her representative is melancholy in the extreme. Captain Bell, of course, declined to concede to the Commissioner the promise that under no

circumstances he would visit or hold communication with the palace at Nagpore. All that Captain Bell would promise was, that he would endeavour, as far as in him lay, to avoid all scandal. Captain Bell, however, pointed out to Mr. Plowden, that although he thought it right to keep the Government well-informed of all that was taking place at Nagpore, the time for their decision on the whole matter could not be far distant, and suggested how inconsistent the Commissioner's indignation at his, Captain Bell's, interference must appear after Mr. Plowden's long submission to it. Captain Bell further showed that, in his interview with the Ranees, he had carefully abstained from creating any suspicion that the Commissioner would not ultimately fulfil the promises he had made so long ago as December 1856, and that he had neither then, nor at any other time, exceeded the language then held by the Commissioner himself. It was upon receiving this answer from Captain Bell, that Mr. Plowden suspended Captain Evans Bell from his office as Assistant Commissioner of Nagpore, and referred this step to the Government of India for its decision.

It is much to be feared that serious, perhaps irreparable, injury has been done to British influence, and *prestige* at Nagpore by the inexplicable conduct of Mr. George Plowden. conduct which—extraordinary as it may appear in London—Mr. Plowden has not yet, it is believed, attempted to justify or explain.

The wretched palace intrigues which have been reported to Government at Calcutta—the promises solemnly made to the late Queen mother, to the present Ranees and to their adopted heir,—promises made in the presence and with the cognisance of Mr. Ellis, the Deputy Commissioner, and Captain Bell, the Assistant Commissioner—yet recklessly neglected and now utterly denied; the unseemly and intemperate behaviour of Mr. Plowden to the members of the Royal family, a detailed account of which is unnecessary in this Memorandum, all betoken a state of affairs which cannot but be deeply injurious to British authority and disgraceful to British honour and justice.

It has been necessary in this Memorandum to describe the conduct of Captain Evans Bell, conduct imperatively demanded of him by his duty to the Supreme Government, as well as by his own sense of honour and justice, but which has brought to him personally a series of painful results ending in his temporary suspension from his appointment. It has also been necessary to animadvert in severe terms on the vacillating and unworthy behaviour of the Chief Commissioner. But the object of this Memorandum has only been to draw the attention of the Council of India to the unsatisfactory state of affairs at Nagpur as far as relates to the Royal family their adopted representative and their pecuniary arrangements.

It is invidious to suppose that Mr. Plowden would wilfully misrepresent the conduct of one of his subordinates, but it is not unreasonable to imagine that Captain Evans Bell will have to suffer all the injury of incalculable delays on the part of the Commissioner of Nagpore, and it will be difficult to obtain from Mr. Plowden that detailed explanation of the whole case absolutely necessary for its elucidation. This is not an idle supposition; far graver interest have suffered by Mr. Plowden's neglect and habits of procrastination. Captain Bell may at times have broken through rules of official etiquette, he may have with undue confidence taken upon himself what he sincerely believed to be the duties of his

superior but it can hardly be denied that for many long months he has in a most painful and injurious position, endeavoured to uphold the reputation of his official superior for good faith and to inspire the Ranees of Nagpore and the Bhonslah family with confidence that their circumstances and the good conduct shown by them at a moment of public danger would be fairly represented to the Supreme Government and would meet the consideration which the subject so eminently deserved

It is difficult for any one who was not present in Central India in 1857 to appreciate either the danger that then threatened our possession of that part of India or the importance of the assistance afforded to the British Government at that time by Her Highness the Banka Baee of Nagpore. It is impossible for any one cognizant of the facts to forget the assistance thus rendered us or to refrain from regretting the neglect shown for the important support rendered to the Government at that critical period by a native royal family who had so many just causes of complaint. To many this exposition of their story may prove insufficient to support their claim to so important and radical a measure as the restoration of the province of Nagpore as one of the native powers of India but none can fail to acknowledge that this family is fully entitled to the most favourable consideration of their claims to compensation for the loss of their position as one of the native sovereigns of India.

It is therefore necessary to consider what measure of compensation would soothe if not satisfy the feelings of the Bhonslah family and at the same time create an impression among the most influential natives of the province of Nagpore and among the native reigning houses favourable to the British Government.

To effect this the least that could be done would be to recognise the adoption of the great grandson of Raghojee II Jancjee Bhonslah, the next of kin to the late Rajah as the representative of the Bhonslah family and to grant him a suitable title with a stipend becoming his rank and its obligations.

A description of the manner in which the jewels and valuables and the private zenana treasury found when we annexed the province were disposed of, has been given above. The sums realised by the sale of the jewels and other valuables, amounting to twenty six lacs of rupees and the private zenana treasury, amounting to seven lacs of rupees should be devoted to the purchase of an entailed landed estate, which would serve to perpetuate the name of the Bhonslahs and the generosity of the British Government and the title of Rajah should be conferred on Janojee Bhonslah as the recognised head and representative of a mediatised Royal house. Further the sum originally allotted for the support of the Royal family, namely three lacs of rupees, should be continued in perpetuity for the support of this family this fund should be under the management of Janojee Bhonslah as head of the family and should remain in perpetuity of one of the charges on the revenues of the province of Nagpore, as long as any representative of the race either by birth or adoption, remains to claim it. It would be proper in order to guard against future eventualities that the Chief Officer of the British Government resident at Nagpore should exercise over the distribution of this pension such a control as would ensure to the subordinate members of the family their fair share in the benefits conferred



upon them by the liberality of the Government : but it will be best, in accordance with native ideas of propriety, that Janojee Bhonslah, as head of the late reigning family of Nagpore, should be the immediate recipient of this income and of the revenues to be derived from the landed estate.

There can be no doubt in the minds of those best acquainted with native character, and the native public opinion that this recognition, however tardy of the claims of a once reigning house, for many years the faithful ally of the British Government, will have a most favourable and reassuring effect and that by such an act of retrospective justice we may in a part of India of very great political importance by its position and historical reputation secure to ourselves firm friends instead of concealed but very ready enemies.

The events of 1857 are unhappily too impressive in their nature, and of too recent occurrence to render it necessary to call them as witnesses to the evils of our past policy, but it will be wise to remember that it will require more than even-handed justice and the most prudent and sagacious statesmanship will be necessary to enable us to retain in security, honour and prosperity our Indian Empire. Let every opportunity be seized to convince the natives of India that the change of policy that has accompanied the transfer of empire from the East India Company to the Crown is real, and not imaginary, and that we are resolved under the new sovereignty not only to continue the many benefits which were bestowed on the country by the Government of the East India Company, but also to efface all traces of the grasping policy which disfigured the history of the last years of that anomalous but wonderful Government of India by the Merchant Princes of England.

(Signed) R. S. ELLIS,

*Madras Civil Service,*

*Deputy Commissioner, Nagpore Province.*

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## MEMORANDUM RELATING TO NAGPORE

## SUPPLEMENT

Since the above Memorandum was compiled, circumstances have occurred which make it evident that it was highly necessary that attention should be called to the state of things existing at Nagpore. The Commissioner, Mr Plowden, has continued that silence towards the Ranees regarding their claims, which had called for the remonstrances contained in the Memorandum, but he has further adopted a line of conduct the statement of which, if not supported by evidence, would appear so extraordinary as to be incredible. Letters describing these recent acts of Mr Plowden are, therefore, now appended. It would be invidious to assign motives for such conduct, and it is impossible to assign any reason which would not appear to be an accusation too grave to be advanced in the absence of the party accused. It will be sufficient to state that until a very recent period, the Ranees of Nagpore had lived in apparently happy union in the dignified seclusion becoming their high rank, their male relatives being engaged with the knowledge and under the superintendence of the Commissioners of Nagpore, in the management of the palace establishments, and of their family affairs—This is the usual and proper economy of a native family of high rank, and this union and high respectability gave the Ranees' applications on behalf of their adopted son Janojee Bhonslah the full weight of being the expression of the wishes of the entire Bhonslah family. Mr Plowden has altered this state of things, he has declared the senior widow, Durya Bace, the sole manager and controller of the palace, servants, and establishments has announced her wish to separate herself from the remainder of the family, and to exclude the nearest male relatives from her palace and has even forbidden these relations from visiting the remaining Ranees, without Durya Bace's permission.

But a more extraordinary act remains to be reported. The Commissioner has, by a public act, entirely renounced all his formal promises on behalf of Janojee Bhonslah, the adopted son of the Ranees, and publicly ignored his position as head of the family.

When Anpoorna Bace, the late Rajah's senior widow, died her heir, according to Hindoo law and custom was Janojee Bhonslah, the adopted son of the Ranees. No one at that time (1855) disputed this, and Lord Dalhousie in answer to an application from the Ranees, announced that he had no objection to Appah Sahib (Janojee Bhonslah's name before adoption) being constituted heir to the late Ranees' private property. Mr Plowden, in November 1855, after Anpoorna Bace's death, took a written acknowledgment from the two Ranees, to the effect that Janojee Bhonslah was their son and heir, and in November 1856, Mr Plowden officially reported to Calcutta the public ceremonies of adoption performed by the Ranees, after giving the new name of Janojee to their adopted son. Further, by a judicial proceeding in his own court, before the public ceremony above described Mr. Plowden exempted the Ranees' adopted son, under the name of Appa Sahib Bhonslah, from the jurisdiction of the ordinary Civil Courts. In accordance with the native feelings, and the usages of native courts, the Ranees obtained permission that

on occasions of ceremony, visits to the Commissioner, religious or other processions, their adopted son should be accompanied by the ancient insignia of the family. Express permission was given by the Commissioner for their display, and these insignia have been constantly used. When the Queen's proclamation was read on the 1st November last, Janojee Bhonslah '*at the Commissioner's request*' accompanied him, surrounded by the relations and high officials of the late Rajah, and accompanied by all the insignia of his rank and position.

Again, Mr. Plowden has always received Janojee Bhonslah with the forms and in the style accorded only to persons of the very highest rank. This was recently and remarkably conspicuous at the Durbar held when Sir Patrick Grant, Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Presidency, visited Nagpore.

It would be difficult to imagine a more entire recognition of Janojee Bhonslah as the head of the Bhonslah family, and the astonishment and dismay of the family may be conceived when Mr. Plowden suddenly, and without any apparent reason, *caused it to be proclaimed by beat of drum throughout the city of Nagpore, that "if any one claimed to be heir to the private property of the late Ranees, Anpoorna Bae and Banka Bae, he should present a petition within a certain period, after which no claims would be admitted"*; thus entirely ignoring the existence and position of Janojee Bhonslah, to whom also he has forbidden the display of the insignia of his rank.

The senior Ranee Durya Bae has been, by some strange and unaccountable means, prevailed upon to separate herself from the junior Ranees, and to exclude from the palace, and from visiting the other Ranees, the male relatives of the family; and she has lately been constituted, by the Chief Commissioner, sole manager and authority over the palace establishments. She has not openly protested against Mr. Plowden's last acts, but the feelings of the junior Ranees, and of their male relations, are clearly set forth in the accompanying correspondence. Mr. Plowden's reply to Purbhut Rao Goojur is also appended. It must be remembered that nothing will convince any person connected with Nagpore, or acquainted with Indian family arrangements, that Durya Bae, the senior Ranee, is acting of her own free will in separating herself and her interests from those of the rest of the family.

As before stated, it would be invidious to assign motives to Mr. Plowden's conduct, or to anticipate those explanations which the emergency of the present state of things at Nagpore peremptorily require of him; but it is right to give what is the opinion entertained of these proceedings by the native public at Nagpore.

The common report and belief among the natives (May 1859) is, that the Commissioner, having repudiated Janojee Bhonslah, silenced and excluded all the male relatives, and the only clever and high-spirited Ranee Anunda Bae, now intends to deal separately with the senior Ranee, Durya Bae. Having reduced, by the sale of cattle and dismissal of servants, the palace household to the present scale of the Ranees' stipends, it is supposed that he will extort from the senior Ranee what is called a Razeenameh, or acquittance, stating that they are all satisfied, and that they have no claim or desire for any alteration in

the provision made for them and that then the Commissioner would state that "all was satisfactorily settled"

This is the public opinion, and is not altogether unnatural or unsupported by Mr Plowden's recent acts. It is deeply to be regretted that, by his former unexplained delays, and by his recent more incomprehensible harsh measures towards an unfortunate family, a British officer of high position should have laid himself open to such grave suspicions.

It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that the Ranees, the writers of the following letter, are the equals in rank and position of the senior Ranee, who has been recently so singularly favoured by the Chief Commissioner, that Nana Aher Rao is the father of the adopted heir Janojee Bhonslah, and that Purbhut Rao Goojur is a relative of the Ranees, and has for years been one of the recognised officers and confidential advisers of the Royal family of Nagpore.

TRANSLATION OF A LETTER SENT TO PURBHUT RAO GOOJUR, NANA AHER RAO, DADOBH SIRKYA AND RUNG RAO MOHIT-TEA, AND PURWANNAS TO THE SAME EFFECT TO TOOKARAM BHOOT AND GHOLAM MUSTAPHA THE OOSTAD OR TUTOR, WHO USUALLY WRITES THE RANEES' PERSIAN NOTES

## I

*From the Commissioner of Nagpore to Purbhut Rao Goojur Sahib, &c*

After salutations, let it be known that yesterday the Assistant Agent went to the palace to visit the Ranee Durya Bacc, when the said Ranee with her own voice said, 'Several persons come into the palace to see Anunda Bacc, and carry on treacherous intrigues, and I do not wish these persons to be admitted into the palace.' Among these persons the Ranee mentioned your name, I have therefore to state that Durya Bacc, being the senior widow of the late Rajah, is the mistress, and absolute in the palace, and therefore she has the right to forbid any one to enter the palace according to her own pleasure. As it appears that the Ranee does not approve of your visiting the palace, you are hereby desired to abstain from doing so without her permission. Be sure to observe the injunctions of this note.

*Dated the 26th March 1859.*

## II

*From the Commissioner of Nagpore to Dadobh Sirkyah Sahib and to the other Sardars*

After salutations, &c, you state in your note of to-day's date that I have appointed Durya Bacc to be the superior Ranee and that in truth she is the superior Ranee, but that in your opinion all the Ranees are equally entitled to your obedience and that with reference to Durya Bacc's statement that you have been carrying on treacherous intrigues, you are not aware of what treachery you have been guilty. You also state that it has always been your custom to

attend at the palace whenever summoned, or invited by any one of the Ranees and that if summoned in future by any of the Ranees, you shall feel bound to obey. And you said in your note that you intended to wait upon me and to make some explanations on this subject. I have only just had time to read your note at 4 p. m. Considering that the Ranee Durya Bae, without any person having inquired or prompted her, made the application of her own accord and with her own voice when the Assistant Agent was visiting her, that several persons were in the habit of visiting the palace against her wishes, and of carrying on treacherous contrivances there, it therefore became necessary to make arrangements according to her request and orders were therefore given by me. And you need not require any other reason for these orders, except this very sufficient reason, that at present the senior Ranee is supreme, and for the proper discipline of the palace household can admit or forbid the visits of any person. And with reference to what you say in your note that the three Ranees are equal in your opinion, you ought to consider that it devolves upon me to decide whether the three are equal, or whether there is not a distinction of rank. What right have you to intrude your opinion on the subject upon me? What necessity is there for you to interfere with your notions? You have no concern whatever with the arrangements for the palace household and I want no advice or opinion on the subject from you. And you must understand that you shall never be allowed to interfere with the palace household; and with reference to my prohibition of your visiting the palace and to your reply that if any one of the Ranees should summon you, you should feel bound to obey, I have to inform you that if you ever attempt to make a single step in the palace without the leave of Durya Bae, the senior Ranee, and against her will, and if the Ranee complains of it to me, I will take such steps as shall put an end to your visits for the future. There is a legal regulation to prevent people from trespassing in other persons' houses. And with reference to what you say about paying me a visit to enter into explanations, I totally refuse to discuss with you the subject of the palace arrangements. On the other hand, if you have any business of your own about which you wish to speak to me, or if Anunda Bae or Kamulja Bae wish to send you to make any statements on their behalf to me, I am ready to receive you; but do not think of visiting me for the purpose of discussing the palace arrangements. This note is sent as a reply and instruction.

*Nagpore, April 8th, 1859.*

### III.

*From Dadoba Sirkya Sahib to Mr. George Plowden, the Commissioner of Nagpore, &c.*

*N. B.*—The replies sent by the other gentlemen are very much to the same effect as this one.

After salutations, let it be known that the purport of your note is understood; that Durya Bae Sahiba said to Captain Shakespear, with her own voice, that certain persons were in the habit of coming into the palace, and of inveigling Anunda Bae and Kamulja Bae, and that she wished them no longer to be admitted. Durya Bae is my daughter\*, and has never been injured by me, how can she have said such a thing against me? I am sure that some one must have inveigled and instructed her, before she could

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\* *N. B.*—Oriental for "my young female relation."

have said it. Besides this the three Ranees are of equal dignity, and if one of them were to say so, it is impossible that it should be of any effect. And you have written in your note that I am convicted of treacherous intrigues, by Durya Baee's information, but I cannot understand to what treachery or intrigues you allude. Has Anunda Baee, or has Kamulja Baee, been persuaded to disobey any of your orders by my treacherous intrigues? If so, I ought to be told of it, and if, indeed, Anunda Baee Sahiba has been contumacious, and if injury has thereby been done to Government, I will confess myself to be guilty of treacherous intrigues. Besides this, you have ruled that Durya Baee is the Maharanee, undoubtedly she is the Maharanee, but all three are equal in dignity, and, therefore, we are bound to show the same deference to the three Ranees. *'It is well known that the Ranee Durya Baee has been deceived into making this application by those persons who were banished from the country of the instance of Major Ramsay and Mr Mansel \*'* But even if the Ranee did speak in this manner, it would have only been just if you the Chief Magistrate, had sent for me, and inquired about it. Instead of doing so, you have without any inquiry, written this note to me. According to ancient custom when any Ranee invites or summons me, I go to the palace, and I am not in the habit of going unless I am invited. I have, therefore, written this note by way of answer to inform you of the state of the case, and I propose to wait upon you to day, and offer some further explanations on the subject.

Written by Dadoba Sirkya

*Dated the 2nd April 1859*

#### IV

*From the Ranees Anunda Baee and Kamulja Baee to the Commissioner of Nagpore*

To the friendly and kind Commissioner, Mr George Plowden, *greeting &c*

After salutations, let it be known that your note on the subject of producing the papers relating to our family estates (Wuttundarees), to the effect that if we did not hand over those papers to Durya Baee, no answer would be given to any of our notes and every note would be returned to us, and other matters has arrived and has been understood. To make use of such severe expressions, in a trifling affair as if you wished to affront us, was not becoming in you. It is a source of surprise and grief to us that although the Rajah of Nagpore, our late husband, was at all times obedient, with all his heart and mind to the British Government, and his conduct was ever marked by good will and affection, such affronts should be offered to the survivors of his family as are unworthy of your high rank and authority, more especially when it is considered that in the year 1857 so many of the sepoys and the populace and chieftains of India revolted from their allegiance, and joined in rebellion, but her late Highness, the revered Banka Baee, reflecting on the ancient ties, with all her personal power and influence, with her heart

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\* Allu \* g to Gov ed Rao father of Ram Rao Furkareen.

and soul, and with all her family, devoted herself to the support of Government. For instance, Captain Tuffuzzool Hoossain Khan, an old servant of the Bhonslah State, by his advice, and the strength of his contrivances, made arrangements of every description. And at that time, and during the lifetime of the Banka Bae, you, and your assistants, Mr Ellis and Captain Bell, made many solemn promises of prosperity and advantages for this family; so that we, relying on your kindness and affection, hoped confidently for some improvement in our condition and dignity, and for some appearance of harmony and comfort. But, on the contrary, this result has arrived, that, on every occasion, nothing seems to be thought of but some attack upon our honour. And this child, Janojee Bhonslah, by your own permission and by the Governor-General's khareeta, was constituted the heir of our lives and property and of the Bhonslah family; and you well know that a written agreement was taken by you at the time of his being adopted from us, and from the members of the Durbar, so that, in fact, all has been performed and perfected by you. It is, therefore, most astonishing to us that your Assistant Agent should have written a note forbidding our son to display his insignia. For you have yourself a hundred times seen this insignia displayed in our son's retinue, and especially when our son with his attendants, and with his insignia, and all the members of the Durbar, had the honour to wait upon the Commander-in-Chief. But it is even more astonishing to us that, the day before yesterday, a proclamation was made, through all the bazars, that if there was any heir to the late Ranees Banka Bae and Anpoorna Bae, he should make his claim within fifteen days. By these words, astonishment is heaped upon astonishment; and it seems to us that, after all these proceedings, approved by you and by His Lordship the Governor-General, all this ignorance and forgetfulness can only arise from an intention on your part to insult us by all possible means. We have not committed any such crime that you should send notes to us in which every word is an intentional insult, while several of our notes remain unanswered. You are the ruler of the time, and these proceedings are unworthy of your dignity: we had confidently hoped, that under the august rule of the Queen some better arrangements for our prosperity would be made than had existed under the former administration, and that the rightful claimant would be favoured by obtaining his right. And we cannot understand how it is that a contrary result seems approaching. Perhaps some new order with reference to our dignity has been promulgated by Her Majesty the Queen. And we should like to know by what law, and by what regulation, you have forbidden our relations to visit the palace. Perhaps on this point, also, some new law has been published. Be so good as to acquaint us with it, that we may be satisfied; and then we will write to the Queen's officials, and beg for the forgiveness for our offences.

*Dated the 7th May 1859.*

From the Ranees Anunda Bae and Kamulja Bae.

(Signed with their marks.)

*From Purbhut Rao Goojur to the Commissioner of Nagpore.*

*H. B.*—A similar note was sent by Nana Aher Rao.

To the illustrious, friendly, and kind Commissioner, Mr. George Plowden ; may his glory be increased.

After salutations, let it be known that your note to the same purport as your former note, with reference to my being forbidden to enter the place, that this prohibition was made at Durya Bae's request, and not by yourself, has been received. But the Maharanee herself has been asked the reason of this prohibition, and she replied that the Commissioner may have prohibited us to visit the palace, but that she had nothing to do with it. So that it is not apparent how these two statements can be verified.

And in these days a note has been sent by the Assistant Agent, addressed to Janojee Baba Sahib, inquiring about and forbidding his retinue and insignia ; and also a proclamation has been made through the bazars, to the effect that if there is any heir to the late Ranees Anpoorna Bae and Banka Bae, he is to present a petition of his claim within fifteen days. The greatest astonishment and alarm are caused by these instances of your kindness and benevolence. For the fact is, that the Janojee Baba Sahib Bhonslah from the first, on account of his being by consanguinity the late Rajah's grandnephew, and the rightful successor to his state, and also by the Ranees' adoption of him as their son, and by his Lordship the Governor-General's and your approval of his being made the heir to the Rance's own property, is the rightful heir. And the retinue and insignia which appertained to him by ancient custom were appointed for him with your knowledge. But the cause of this ignorance or forgetfulness, in spite of your knowledge of those matters which were performed and perfected by yourself, is utterly unknown, unless it be that your kindness and benevolence have grown less. For instance, on the day of the revered Banka Bae's death, in presence of all the Rantes and many other persons, you said with your own auspicious voice, " Janojee Baba Sahib Bhonslah is the heir and master of all you Rantes, and of the deceased Ranees, and a khareeta to that effect from the Governor-General has been received." Then without some further explanation on your part, this answer appears unanswerable. Since you are the ruler of the period, you may do what pleases you ; but these proceedings appear to be far from justice and rectitude. Although you have strictly charged us not to interfere in the affairs of the household, yet when we see the honour and dignity of the Bhonslah family endangered, our fidelity to the salt of the revered Banka Bae will not permit us to be indifferent, or to prefer a quiet life. Being compelled to this cause, we beg to represent that it is impossible for us to refrain from interference in matters which involve the honour of the Bhonslah family. The Ranees, from the first to this day, have paid the most implicit obedience to your orders and to the wishes of the Government, chiefly in the hope that they would see some improvement in the prospects and dignity of Janojee Bhonslah, their son and heir to their property, and the rightful heir to this state. But instead of this, attacks made on his honour and respectability, Then when we view this unkindness on your part, who are the Chief Magistrate.



we cannot see how any good arrangements are to be made for the prosperity and fulfilment of the desires of these Ranees, who presented this country and all their wealth as an offering to the British Government. I hope therefore that you will reflect carefully upon the above observations, and honour me with an answer. What more can be written but good wishes and compliments?

*Dated the 9th May 1859.*

Sent by Purbhut Rao Goojur.

## VI.

*From the Commissioner of Nagpore to Purbhut Rao Goojur, in reply.*

N. B.—A similar answer was sent to Nana Aher Rao.

To the friendly and kind Purbhut Rao Goojur Sahib, greeting.

After salutations, this is the matter, that your note, dated the 9th May 1859, was received at 5 o'clock in the evening of the same day, and has been perused by me. As to what you say regarding the prohibition against your visiting the palace, that this prohibition was not made by her Highness's desire, but that, on the contrary, in answer to an inquiry as to the reason of this prohibition, the Maharanee Durya Bae said, "The Commissioner has forbidden you, but I had nothing to do with it," and that you do not know how these two statements ought to be verified, my answer is as follows: Firstly, Durya Bae Sahiba said with her own voice to the Assistant Agent, without any one having questioned her, that she did not wish Purbhut Rao Goojur and others to have access to the palace, and that she wished them to be excluded. Secondly, on the next day after that on which Durya Bae gave permission to you and to Nana Aher Rao and others, to visit Kamulja Bae during her illness, and sent for you that you might quietly pay a visit and then return to your own houses, and on which Nana Aher Rao, before going to see Kamulja Bae, went to Durya Bae's apartment, Durya Bae wrote plainly to me and said, "Nana Aher Rao, under pretence of quietly visiting Kamulja Bae in her illness, came to me and made use of wrangling and quarrelsome language, and I therefore sent at once to Purbhut Rao Goojur and Dadoba Sirkya to tell them not to come to the palace." Durya Bae's note to this effect is now in my possession. Thirdly, when on Saturday, the seventh of this month, I went in company with Captain Shakespear, the Assistant Agent, and Lieutenant Cumberlege, the Personal Assistant, to pay a visit to Durya Bae at the palace, and I, with my own voice and without any interpreter, in presence of the above-mentioned gentlemen, asked three or four times whether she was really pleased and satisfied with those persons having been forbidden at her request to enter the palace, mentioning Nana Aher Rao's and your names; and the Ranee Durya Bae at each several times of asking, replied that it was necessary for her that those persons should be forbidden, and that she totally disapproved of their having access to the palace.

Then in opposition to all these proofs I cannot believe that the Ranee said as is stated in your note, that the Commissioner may have forbidden you, but that she had nothing to do with it. And I cannot place any trust in your representation of this affair. Therefore, you must clearly understand that until

Durya Baee, either by a note or with her own voice, states to me that she has no intention of excluding Purbhut Rao Goojur from the palace, no permission to enter the palace will be issued by me. If you put one foot within the palace, I will assuredly correct it properly.

And with reference to what you say about the Assistant Agent having sent a note to Janojee Baba Sahib, prohibiting his retinue, &c, and about a proclamation having been made through all the bazars summoning any person who claims to be heir to the late Ranees Anpoorna Baee and the Banka Baee, to appear within fifteen days, and that Janojee Baba Sahib is the late Rajah's grand nephew, and is entitled to his retinue and insignia and to succeed to his estate, this is my reply, —That you have no privilege or authority to interfere or to address notes to me in these matters, and more especially as your note is most contumacious and disrespectful. Therefore it is thus written, that henceforward no note of yours will be received by me. If contrary to these instructions you should send me a note the envelope will not be opened, but will be returned to you closed. If you have any necessary matter to state on your own private affairs, henceforward you are not permitted to write notes, but like other persons you will have to write a petition on stamped paper, which will be read in open court. But if you present any claim or petition on the subject of Janojee Baba Sahib's retinue and insignia, and rights and inheritance and succession which are matters with which you have no concern and which in my opinion are equivalent to making a claim to the Principality on behalf of Janojee Baba Sahib, you must understand distinctly that I have full authority to take measures for the punishment of such proceedings, according to the laws and rules thereunto provided and that I shall exercise that authority without hesitation. For the present, until the pleasure of Government is known an order has been passed for suspending the payment of your stipend because it is quite unfit that you should be allowed to write so contumacious and disrespectful a note to the Governor General's Agent on a forbidden subject, and one in which you have no concern and continue to draw a stipend from Government. And especially that excuse which you have brought forward on the subject of your interference in the matter of Janojee Baba Sahib's retinue and insignia and inheritance, that it is impossible for you to abstain from interfering in such matters as are insulting to the Bhonslah family, is quite inadmissible for Janojee Baba Sahib himself is on the spot, and he is not so young or so deficient in sense, that if there should be anything wrong or difficult in his affairs, he is unable personally to plead his own cause or that there should be any necessity for strangers to make any statements or excuses on his behalf.

(Signed) G PLOWDEN,

*Commissioner and Agent to the Governor-General.*

*Dated the 10th May 1859*

(Signed) R S ELLIS,

*Madras Civil Serv. co,*

*Deputy Commissioner,*

*Nagpore Province*

*Letter No. 48, dated London, the 7th October 1859 (Political), from the Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Right Hon'ble the Governor-General of India in Council.*

With reference to my despatch (No. 43) of the 23rd of September, in the Political Department, I have now to inform Your Excellency, that Mr. R. S. Ellis, Deputy Commissioner in Nagpur, now on leave of absence in this country, has been directed to proceed to India, to aid the investigation which you have been instructed to institute into certain matters connected with the administration of that province.

2. As Mr. Ellis returns to India, on public service, before the expiration of his leave of absence, at considerable certified risk to his health, I have consented that, on the termination of the enquiry, he shall be permitted to take a further furlough to Europe, for a period not exceeding twelve months, during which time he will draw his furlough allowances as at present. His passage money to and from India will also be reimbursed to him from the public treasury.

3. I have directed Mr. Ellis to proceed to Bombay, and immediately upon his arrival at that place, to report himself by telegraph to your Excellency, and to await your instructions.

*Letter No. 182, dated Fort William, the 8th October 1859, from the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, to the Right Hon'ble Sir CHARLES WOOD, Bart., M. P., Secretary of State for India.*

We have the honor to transmit copies of papers, as detailed in the accompanying abstract, respecting Mr. Plowden's administration of the Province of Nagpur.

2. We beg to refer you to the Minute recorded by the Governor-General and to the letter addressed to Mr. Plowden on the 3rd instant, for the reasons which have placed us under the necessity of removing that gentleman from the office of Commissioner of Nagpore.

3. We have appointed Major E. K. Elliot, the second officer in the Commission, to succeed Mr. Plowden as Commissioner of Nagpore. A copy of the letter addressed to Major Elliot is also appended to the collection of papers.

P. S.—The correspondence connected with the subject of this Despatch being voluminous copies of them will be forwarded by the next mail. At present we are enabled to transmit only the documents noted on the margin.

Minute by  
Governor-Gen  
dated 24th S  
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Mr. G. Pl  
dated 3rd O  
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for E. K.  
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*Letter No 60, dated Camp Puncture, the 9th January 1860, from the Under Secretary to the Government of India, with the Governor-General, Foreign Department, to the Commissioner of Nagpore*

I am directed by the Governor General to forward for your information copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State for India, No 67, dated the 2nd ultimo, approving of the proceedings connected with the removal of Mr Plowden from the Nagpore Commission, and to request that the several reports called for on the matters referred to in Mr Ellis' memorandum be quickly furnished

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*Despatch No 67, dated India Office, London, the 2nd December 1859, from the Right Hon'ble Mr C WOOD, Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Right Hon'ble the Governor-General of India in Council.*

In my despatches Nos 43 and 48 in the Political Department under date the 22nd September and 7th October, I directed the appointment of a Commission to enquire into certain charges preferred against Mr George Plowden, the Commissioner of Nagpore, and I informed Your Excellency that Mr Ellis who had instituted these charges had been instructed to return to India to assist the enquiry. I now learn from your letter No 182 of the 8th of October that you have already removed Mr Plowden from the Nagpore Commission and have appointed Major E K Elliot in his place

2 The grounds of this decision as set forth in Your Excellency's minute\* of September 24th are continued neglect of duty and habitual disregard of your orders, and I cannot doubt that under the circumstances stated the public interest required the removal of Mr. Plowden from his post. Your proceedings are therefore approved.

3 With reference however to my despatches above noted, I desire that the matters brought to my attention in Mr Ellis' memorandum may be investigated and reported upon with as little delay as possible. I cannot consent to Mr Plowden's reappointment until the result of this investigation and such an explanation as he may afford regarding the official delinquency described in Your Lordship's minute shall have satisfied me that he is competent to discharge the duties of an office of responsibility

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